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The Expository Times

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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

NOWHERE is the danger of unjustifiable generalization more apparent than in religious circles. It is easy for a judgment made without factual information or historical enquiry to be accepted at its face value, and to become an almost unquestioned assumption in the minds of the uncritical or the ill-informed. The more remote the period concerned the more difficult it is to secure accuracy of interpretation. We should be grateful, therefore, for every study founded on wise scholarship and first-hand knowledge which can correct common misapprehensions and set the truth in clearer perspective. Professor H. E. W. TURNER'S Bampton Lectures of 1954 — *The Pattern of Christian Truth* [1]—admirably fulfil this function as a Study in the Relations between Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Early Church—a subject which is in harmony with what the writer describes as the constant appeal of the Anglican Church (after Scripture) to the Church of the first five centuries.

It is commonly asserted that Patristic formulations of doctrine and credal statements were forced on the Church by the need for meeting heretical opinion. But this is, at best, a superficial account of what took place. The grip of the Church on the religious facts—' the concept of Incarnation as an act of Divine Irruption into human history,' for example—is no less important than a demand for the defence of the faith. Biblical revelation provided an essential and positive ingredient in doctrinal affirmations apart from an heretical attack. Theological formulæ reflect the life of the Church in liturgy and devotion and are concerned with its teaching mission, as well as with its polemical controversies. Professor TURNER, in thus elucidating the relations of Orthodoxy and Heresy, provides a corrective to common misunderstandings. He points out, further, that Heresy was not a movement necessarily independent of the beliefs and tradition which it calls in question, as is shown by the careful analysis of heretical methods—dilution, truncation, distortion, archaism, evacuation—given in the third of these Lectures, with its additional Note on the Churchmanship of the Heretics.

Discussion of the formation of the New Testament Canon provides a no less salutary corrective to casually acquired impressions on a difficult subject. Apart from the four-fold gospel and the Pauline *corpus*, which are basic, the apostolic authority claimed for Hebrews or the Apocalypse must be considered, along with ' knowledge by the ancients ' which enabled Eusebius, for example, to make a special plea for 1 Peter. Beyond these *criteria* lies the further question of general utility and orthodoxy, indicated by the use of a book in public worship or as a source of doctrine. The interplay of such diverse factors, as well as the influence of heretics like Marcion, on the Church's answer to the question, ' What are the Scriptures ? ' provides material for an important contribution to the whole problem of canonicity. In the same way, the place of Tradition, so often dismissed by the impatient modern as a dead hand, demands study such as is here offered in the threefold contribution made by Biblical exegesis, the body of doctrine and the rites and ceremonies of the Church. In this connexion there are illuminating comments on the topic of Apostolic Succession, and the influence of the major sees, Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, leading to the conclusion that ' the advocates of any theory of apostolic succession which depends upon the historical proof of the unbroken continuity of a particular method of tactual transmission are compelled to pass into regions in which the problems outweigh the probabilities. . . . Their ecclesiastical opponents are, however, liable to be too chary of accepting the fact of the transmission of the apostolic authority by whatever means . . . it was conveyed to the monepiscopate of later times.'

The Lectures, as printed, run to almost five hundred pages, the first part dealing with the relations of Orthodoxy and Heresy, the second with the development of Orthodoxy itself. In both parts the three elements of Scripture,

[1] Mowbray ; 42s. net.

Tradition, and Reason are carefully examined and a clearly constructed argument, cumulative in its emphasis, is presented. Contemporary problems are not left out of account. Bultmann's existentialism, and his interpretation of the New Testament in the light of Gnostic motifs, receive unfavourable comment. 'The evidence does not seem to come away at all clearly at the points which his theory requires.' Cullmann's endeavour to establish a convincing connexion between the complexity of Baptismal formulæ and their date is criticised. His protest against too exclusive an association of Trinitarian formulæ with Baptism, however, is recognised as relevant, and the thesis that the advent of our Lord represented the true dividing line in any Christian interpretation of history as one that the Fathers would have found no great difficulty in accepting. There is a shrewd comment on certain contemporary trends in the suggestion that eschatology has been converted into 'a skeleton key capable of unlocking the door leading to the major mysteries of Christian existence.' The present ecumenical movement is welcomed as affording some hope of recovering 'the dimension in depth in Christian Theology which has been too long impaired by the theological isolationism into which a divided Church has fallen.'

While thus showing the relevance for to-day of the Patristic theology, Professor TURNER is careful not to claim too much for his own arguments and to do justice to the positions of those from whom he differs. None the less he can be refreshingly pointed in his comments. One viewpoint, for example, is said to display 'more learning than judgment, more ingenuity than conviction,' while other theories are described as 'at best, interesting speculations which lack the hall-mark of certainty, and even the more modest attraction of probability.'

The range and comprehensiveness, as well as the quality, of this important contribution to Patristic studies will be apparent from what has been said. As is fitting in Divinity Lecture Sermons which are to be 'preached,' each Lecture begins with an appropriately chosen text, and ends with a finely phrased Ascription in Trinitarian form. From the closing paragraph of the concluding Lecture these words may be quoted as indicating the tone and temper of the whole treatment—'Behind the instinctive rejection of heresy there lay a kind of Christian common sense . . . which is merely another name for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. . . . Despite the picture of flesh and blood contestants with mixed motives and dubious techniques which the Church historians will often bring to light, it is impossible for the historian of Christian thought in its classical formative period to mistake the guidance of the Spirit of Truth to Whom with the Father and the Son be now ascribed all honour, glory, dominion, and power now and for evermore.'

What has the Bible to say about the burning question of Christian unity? Nothing could be more important than this for the whole ecumenical movement; yet there are surprisingly few books which deal with it explicitly. Too many books which purport to deal with Christian unity actually deal with Christian division; and too few books try to gather together clearly and concisely the teaching of the Bible on what unity means. Hence the importance of the recent publication of a small but valuable introduction to the subject by the Rev. Anthony HANSON, D.D.—*The Meaning of Unity*.[1] We have space to mention only a few of the many interesting points which emerge from his review of the Biblical evidence.

The central affirmation of the New Testament about the unity of the Church is that that unity consists in being in Christ. He is the unity of the Church. Moreover, since the Church's unity is thus given by God and not made by man, the Church is one and cannot be divided. That is not a sufficient guide for all the complex problems of the everyday life of the Church, but it provides the framework in which such problems must be worked out. By the standards of the New Testament the importance of being in Christ far outweighs every other element in the unity of the Church.

Again, the unity of the Church does not depend on the ministry. Some confusion has arisen at this point from the fact that the apostles had a double authority. They had a teaching authority due to the fact that they were witnesses to Christ and His resurrection. In this respect they were unique, and the Church must ever continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching. Further, however, they had the authority and commission which Christ gave to the Church, because for a time they *were* the Church. The New Testament does not show us this second authority passing from them to the ministry. On the contrary it seems to pass to the Church as a whole; or rather it widens out from the apostles who were the Church in embryo to all who in process of time are brought into the Church.

That becomes clearer through a discussion of St. Paul's apostolic authority. St. Paul does not seem to think of the apostles as having any authority as an order, but rather as individuals. The fact that he had evangelized a certain area gave him an

[1] Highway Press; 6s. net.

apostolic authority there, for he was the founder and nucleus of the Church and therefore for a time the bearer of the Church's authority in that area. This apostolic office and authority, however, cannot and need not be passed on to another individual, and so on from generation to generation. (The case of Diotrephes in the Third Epistle of John presents a difficult problem for those who hold that the apostles handed on their authority to bishops.) It is the Church which has the apostolic authority of Christ. That authority may be exercised through the Church's ministry, but the authority is vested in the Church. The ministry is dependent on the Church, not the Church on the ministry. The New Testament knows nothing of a ministry which is constitutive of the Church.

This conclusion may be brought into relation with the Church's missionary task and stated in terms of a modern situation. The missionary who establishes a church in a heathen land is carrying out the apostolate of the Church there on behalf of the Church; but, once the church is established and able to carry on its own life, the apostolate passes from the missionary and becomes the task of the newly founded church. The mission is the means whereby the Church carries out its essential task, and it carries an apostolic authority; but it must not try to keep it. Its aim must be to pass on the task and the authority to the indigenous church.

What practical guidance for the problem of reunion emerges from the pattern of unity displayed in the New Testament? First, we must start from the principle that all baptized Christians in any given place are the Church, and that all baptized Christians together make up the catholic Church, though it is possible that some baptized persons may be so far gone in error that they really forfeit the name of Christian. Second, all baptized Christians in any one place must be able to worship together. Third, there must be one universally acknowledged ministry in the one Church. Fourth, the Church must submit to the judgment of the gospel, and desire always to reform itself according to the Word of God. If one wishes to see a beginning of putting these four principles into practice, one may look to the Church of South India, where there has been a rediscovery of the fundamental unity of the Church and a great experiment in giving expression to that unity.

In his last chapter Dr. HANSON points out that in almost every age of the Church's history one can detect the movements in which lay the seeds of progress. At the beginning of the Dark Ages it was the monastic movement: in the thirteenth century it was the Franciscan and Dominican friars: in the sixteenth century it was the Reformation. A hundred and fifty years ago it was the missionary movement, issuing from the evangelical revival, that pointed the way forward. To-day it may be the ecumenical movement which is being used of God in like fashion. This is not to suggest that everything in these movements was good: far from it; but it seems that God does raise up and use such movements for the good of His Church, over-ruling their errors and failures to His greater glory.

Suggestions on Preaching the New Testament[1]

Some Difficulties of Exposition and Some Examples of Interpretation

BY THE REVEREND ARTHUR A. COWAN, D.D., EDINBURGH

THE preacher knows that the initial difficulty in expounding the Bible and getting it across to modern hearers is the period costume of Biblical truth, its ancient dress, what Carlyle called 'Hebrew old clothes.' Should these be cast off as merely antique garments of thought or retained as inherent in the truth? How is one to interpret such strange forms as angels and demons, apocalypse and miracle? One has to decide whether these are only old-world symbols or an intrinsic and valuable part of the Scripture message. That must be settled in the study if a man is to grasp what to omit and what to include in the pulpit.

According to Dr. C. H. Dodd, *angels* were derived from a reduced polytheism, and were middlemen between the transcendent 'Otherness' of God and His nearness, a makeshift to connect the Divine and the human. The Incarnation mediated the eternal God to men in the person of His Son, and rendered the idea of angels obsolete, and angels are never mentioned in the Fourth Gospel. Perhaps angels are poetical imagery to express the truth that as God has His servants on

[1] Address delivered on 15th November, 1954, as President of Trinity College Students' Union, Glasgow, and part of his Warrack Lectures, *The Primacy of Preaching To-day*, which will be issued shortly.

earth He has also stronger, more radiant servants in heaven. As symbolic pictures of this, the angels would keep their ancient places.

But is not the belief in angels, good spirits, bound up with *the belief in demons*, evil spirits? The New Testament diagnoses as cases of demon-possession many illnesses which modern medicine would diagnose as psychopathic conditions, instances of neurosis. It is not clear how far our Lord shared the current belief in demons, as He did not ascribe all forms of sickness which He cured to demon-possession, but only some of them. Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, with his clinical experience of morbid aberrations, says: 'The last hypothesis to which I am driven in accounting for illness of mind or body is the hypothesis of demon-possession. Yet I cannot rule it out as impossible.' There is a trend in modern theology to admit the existence of evil spirits, and if there may be demons there may be angels too.

Well, are the demons and the angels actual or allegorical? That would seem to be an open question. Some theologians hold that there is no conclusive evidence in science or psychology against the existence of evil spirits, demons. Anyhow, all are convinced that there is an irrational, demonic element in human life. It is this demonry that constitutes the moral tragedy behind the bland façade of our civilization, the mystery of evil. Paul Tillich interprets it thus: 'The demonic has its dwelling in the subconscious level of the human soul,' and he refers to the 'libido,' 'the ego-instinct,' 'the will to power' in Neitzsche and 'the sexual urge' in Freud as describing the demon-possessed state. There may thus be an eruption of the submental which overflows and destroys the higher sanities. This explains evil spirits as outpourings from the abysmal deeps of the sub-conscious. But others feel this is too subjective. There is a growing sense that evil is objective, something which exists outside of us—call it corporate evil or the sinful inheritance of our race if you like—and it appears to fasten on many lives a fiendish grip.

> Now it seems some unseen monster lays
> His vast and filthy hands upon my will,
> Wrenching it backward into his, and spoils
> My bliss in being.

However we may construe demonry, it should make our preaching more alive to the malign forces of evil which seize men and women, and more determined to have a message powerful enough to rescue the hapless victims and make them happy victors.

Another difficulty in interpreting the Bible is *what to make of the apocalyptic element*. Apocalypse shows its pattern in the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation. Both were tracts for the times to stiffen morale against emperor-worship, and used symbols and imagery as a secret code to evade the censor in an age of persecution. The apocalyptists called in the transcendent world to redress the balance of the actual, and predicted the overthrow of the pagan oppressor on a day of reckoning, when God would break in to disrupt the natural order in a cosmic 'show-down,' the stars would fall, the moon would be turned into blood, and the sea would disgorge its dead. This violent eschatology voiced itself in some of the prophets, but it is prophecy run wild, taking a fantastic and vindictive turn. It is often unsound and unmerciful, with a tendency to spectacular materialism. But the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation stir us to admiration by their heroic push into the unseen, what Clement of Alexandria called 'an enterprise of noble daring to take our way to God.' Well, how should the preacher treat apocalyptic? He should demonstrate that apocalyptic at its highest has two elements of permanent validity to be impressed on a congregation. Firstly, it prevented men from being intimidated by reminding them that God is marching on in the unseen as the Lord of history who decides its issues for the fulfilment of His purpose. Better times are coming, because the Divine eternal order breaks in upon the human, temporary disorder to prove that God reigns. This is a timely message for us. Secondly, apocalypse affirmed the doctrine of resurrection, clarified the prospect of a future life and declared that God could not leave in the grave those who had committed themselves to Him. Because people belong to a spiritual world as well as to a natural world, there must be immortality in store. Again this is a timely message for us, not only for old people in the evening of their days to add gold to their sunset, but also for young people who in two successive generations have been called upon to face death in two world wars. The hereafter is a very live question to-day both for age and for youth. This twofold message of apocalyptic that the invisible order is our ultimate defence, and our final satisfaction is undoubtedly a word of God which goes ringing down the ages to keep shaken lives on their feet and to lift those who have collapsed in fear. This is a rallying call to be preached without the crashing melodrama or the eschatology of hatred and doom.

Yet another perplexity of expository preaching is *how to treat miracle*. Take the puzzling instance of Jesus turning water into wine. The Evangelist would not have thought it any more difficult for the Master to turn water into wine than for us to turn water into steam, into ice, or into hydraulic power. But is that what he meant? Would it

have become Jesus to change water into a large quantity of wine? The Evangelist says this miracle was the first manifestation of Jesus' glory, and did our Lord merely revive languishing mirth by giving the wedding guests plenty to drink? Dick Swiveller said, 'Fan the sinking flame of hilarity, and pass the rosy wine'—an odd way surely for Jesus to manifest His glory. It has been computed that the water-pots contained a hundred and twenty gallons, and the amount of wine provided at the end of a marriage feast would be so excessive as to encourage a debauch. The supply of such lavish potations could scarcely be described as the first sign that salvation had arrived. Let me enlarge for a moment on how this miracle should be treated in preaching. Probably the Fourth Evangelist is allegorizing some incident to inform us that Jesus began at Cana to work a miracle of transformation in human experience. The stone jars held water for ceremonial washing, but this was only an outward purification, whereas our Lord purifies and warms the heart. When the ablutions of Judaism had failed to change human nature and religion had gone stale and empty, it was the glory of Jesus Christ that He supplied a stimulant which elevated disappointed lives and made them fresh, satisfied, aglow with a new spirit. He spoke of His gospel as 'new wine,' 'the cup of the new covenant,' and He replaced the weakness of water with the strength of wine. This is what our Evangelist wishes to symbolize when he relates how our Lord brought a new, rich spirit into impoverished lives and filled them with more vivid colour and flavour. When Jesus Christ took charge, character which was as weak as water became animated and transformed with spiritual power, and the water was made wine. Our Lord's presence kept the village festivity from falling flat and petering out in complaint. When the good cheer failed He provided better cheer. The banquet of our civilization may have broken down, but the scene of lost hopes and faded joys is a suitable place for God's self-revelation to prosper. Says Brunner: 'By the Incarnation, God has proved that the inherited human scene and the inherited human nature are fit to express God's saving purpose with success.' 'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.' It should cure defeatism and brighten and invigorate plaintive people to know that the characteristic of the Incarnate Son of God is that He replaces human weakness with Divine strength, and changes water into wine. This is how He manifests His glory. More than that, He entitles us to look forward to increased resources of spirit. The best wine of the Christian life comes, not at the beginning but at the end, not in youth but in years of mature insight. G. K. Chesterton says that the young are apt to think their disasters are final and to become too pessimistic as if the end of the world had come. Note his words: 'The power of hoping through everything, the knowledge that the soul survives its adventures, this great inspiration comes to the middle-aged: God has kept this good wine until now . . . the old have discovered their indestructibility; they have seen the end of the end of the world.' So a man in touch with Jesus Christ should grow a bigger soul as he gets older. Time may seem to be telling against him, but he discovers that the longer he is in the Master's service the more rewarding and wonderful the Master proves to be. James Smetham thus describes an elderly member of his Methodist class: 'He stumbled along on hot July days with a tendency to hernia, selling a bit of tea, and with a small pension, but when he came into his class he prayed as though he had ten thousand a year.' You see, the man knew that his weakness was being replaced by Divine strength as the years went on, and that Jesus Christ changed the water into wine and the best wine comes at the end. Therefore the changing of the water into wine at Cana should be preached as a parable or allegory rather than as a miracle, and it should be proclaimed that Jesus manifests His glory as the transformer of human experience into something rich and splendid. Then take *the instance of the feeding of the five thousand* on the hillside. How should that be interpreted? Probably it should be understood, not as a magical multiplication of loaves and fishes but as a generous change in the spirit of the crowd who were moved by our Lord to share their eatables so that everyone had enough. Which would be the greater miracle—a plentiful provision of food or the hearts of the multitude stirred to provide for one another? It was the Divine love instilled into selfish human nature that made the bread go round and satisfied the hunger of all. This wonderful transformation of the average person was the achievement of Jesus Christ, and no one else could achieve it. It may be less factual but it is more in harmony with the truth to expound the feeding of the five thousand in this way, because Jesus never played the spell-binder or wizard, and His miracles were never self-advertising stunts but revelations of God's power and willingness to succour.

Before preaching on a miracle, we should first weigh the evidence for it and then examine whether its face value or some deeper value is more in keeping with our Lord's redeeming purpose. The decisive factor is what would be most appropriate to such a One as Jesus Christ. But with few exceptions, the rule is never to minimize the miraculous, because the miraculous is to be expected when Jesus Christ takes charge of a

situation. For consider! What is the supernatural but the personal mastering Nature, not by breaking Nature's laws but by applying them in a new way. Material forces can be rearranged and redirected to accomplish some personal purpose. A doctor may fly a stretcher-case in an aeroplane to a hospital hundreds of miles away—that is personal intention regrouping the energies of organized matter in a supernatural way; mind, will, getting on the top of Nature. Jesus Christ proclaimed the supremacy of the personal, and that means that persons are not at the mercy of the springs and levers and revolving wheels of the natural system but are intended to master them. Through faith, resolve, prayer, God enters into personal relations with us so that we need not be over-powered and crushed by the machine. Dr. H. H. Farmer says that a man on his knees in prayer finds that God is dealing with him and he is dealing with God, and so prayer may be called '*the inner will-side of events*.' Just so! What do we will and what does God will? Our sermons should declare that is what counts, and Jesus Christ proved that miracle happens when the human will is perfectly in harmony with the Divine will, as in His own case. Where we seek and embrace God's purpose, as Jesus did, we become confederates of the personal Love which over-rules the clockwork of Nature and can re-adapt it to fulfil His design. We should preach that miracles are to be expected when we grasp God's saving hand and hold on till the situation opens up in a new and surprising way. If we do not preach a supernatural religion, we might as well not preach at all, and we should never forget that personal faith can give an unpredictable turn to the course of Nature and that in answer to prayer miracles of healing and miracles of retrieval do happen.

It is our function to preach the gospel, and what was the gospel which the apostles preached? It was not a moral directive or an ethical code like the Sermon on the Mount, but news of God's mighty acts in the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The first emphasis was on facts, historic events, the saving action of God. St. Peter and St. Paul were the first preachers of the Christian message, and they proclaimed that prophecy was fulfilled and a new age had come in Christ crucified and risen and now exalted to the right hand of God. Christ's death and resurrection were put in the forefront from the beginning and presented as the achievement of God's age-long purpose of redeeming love. That was the gospel first preached. The first essential is that people should be freed from their self-infatuation and shown how blind and futile it is. Niebuhr thus explains how Christ and Him crucified is the wisdom and power of God unto salvation: 'Divine mercy cannot be effective till the seriousness of sin is fully known. The knowledge that sin causes suffering to God is an indication of the seriousness of sin. . . . The individual existing human being must feel himself a sinner.' True, and the Cross makes a man morally sensitive and perturbed, and cures him of any boastful independence which disclaims the need of a Saviour. There might be *a sermon on the contrast between Pilate and Jesus.* Pilate was sick of these self-satisfied, quarrelsome Jews, who were always objecting to something, and now they were clamouring for the execution of an innocent Man because they had taken a spite at Him. It was a dirty business, and now he washed his hands of these scurvy rascals, he was done with them and their base schemes, and would take no further responsibility. So he contracted out of his duty to see justice done. But Jesus did not wash His hands of the dirty business of sin; though He was sick of it He could not abandon its poor dupes; He must wash their minds of sinful delusion, and so expose evil as a killer of the best that people would condemn it, be shocked into repentance. Then they would be ready to receive forgiveness and be reconciled with God. So He went to the Cross that the dirty business might be cleaned up, that evil might be judged as guilty before it could be forgiven. According to Dr. Schweitzer, 'the good conscience is an invention of the devil,' *i.e.*, it is a self-complacence which separates from God, and people must be undeceived about their self-sufficiency and self-righteousness, must feel they are being judged at Calvary before they can be forgiven. Sinful creatures are we all, and the first preaching of the gospel was realistic and startling, because it began with the Cross where Jesus died to move guilty men to repent and receive the forgiveness of sins. The primary emphasis was on the death of Christ for our salvation.

But it was not a dead Lord that was proclaimed. No, it was a living Lord, present in His church, and His resurrection proved Him to be the indestructible purpose and power of God, eternity come into time. It was the words and actions of this Risen Christ that were recorded, and His teaching and His miracles were included in the apostolic preaching along with the facts of His death and resurrection. The message told of Christ crucified and risen, Christ's guidance on faith and conduct and His supernatural power, and Christ's advent of grace already realized and His advent in final victory still to come. This constituted the gospel which the apostles proclaimed as the climax of Scripture and the fulfilment of prophecy. This is our signpost as to what comes first in preaching—the apostolic gospel.

How is the preacher to get the right perspective for expounding the New Testament? What is essential is that we should grasp the dimensions of Jesus Christ or rather let His dimensions grasp us. The best way to let Him bulk large in our view, in His full reality and dominance, is to read through the Synoptic Gospels at one sitting, which will take two and a half hours. The effect of this is like a new mental and spiritual birth, and gives us a fresh awareness of being alongside Jesus Christ in His encounter with various situations and persons. It brings a vivid sense of His personality commanding the particular scene, master of the event, and we are conscious of His supremacy as never before. We recognize that He is greater than His utterances, bigger than His words, which are only the remembered fragments of all He said and may be sometimes imperfectly reported. So the highest authority for Christian faith is not the sayings of our Lord, but His person, what He was in Himself. Granted that no man spake like this man! Granted that He claimed, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.' Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote: 'Truth is tough: it is like a football: you may kick it about all day, but it remains round and full in the evening.' Yes, and the words of Jesus can never be deflated by any rough usage, for they are spirit and life. But the final authority is not His conversation and His teaching—it is His person. He does not merely talk about God, He transmits the life of God. He is so perfect in His alignment with God, so complete in His certainty, so sure in His mediation of God that His lordship enthralls us when we read through the Synoptic Gospels at one sitting. Two and a half hours will do it, and it may make all the difference to your personal religion and to your ministry. It will be a special uplift to you before you embark on any piece of evangelism.

After reading through the Synoptics, we should read through the Fourth Gospel to get its restatement of the original message, and to understand its method of dramatizing episodes to interpret the truth and to give graphic power to its doctrine and polemic. Then we can turn to the Book of Acts and watch the impact made on the pagan world by the first preaching of the Apostles and Christian missionaries. We can follow that with a perusal of the Epistles. It is only after we have been in such contact with the mind and character of Jesus Christ and the interpretation given to them in the New Testament, that we discern most clearly the advance of revelation through law-giver, prophet and psalmist to the evangelists, and see how the Old Testament Scriptures are fulfilled in Christ. Thus we acquire the right perspective for expository preaching of the New Testament, when we are sufficiently acquainted with the New Testament to measure the religious development which has taken place and to realize how the sunrise of truth in the Old Testament has been consummated in the warm sunshine of noon-day, in Him who is the Light of the World.

The Bible contains the Word of God, but the complete Word of God is Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, and Jesus Christ is the final authority by which everything in the Bible must be tested and judged. His towering quality dwarfs all others in the communication of God to our minds and hearts, and He has the supreme right to command the reverent consent of all our faculties. He attests Himself as the authoritative truth about the Divine character and purpose, because He is not merely a servant of God but His Son. In Luther's words, 'Christ is the Lord and King of Scripture.'

Literature

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

A DISCUSSION of Professor Joachim Jeremias' *Die Gleichnisse Jesu* appeared in this journal in November 1954. Emeritus Professor S. H. Hooke's translation—*The Parables of Jesus* (S.C.M.; 16s. net)—has now placed this notable book in the hands of a still wider public, and a very warm vote of thanks is due to him and the publishers. Few tasks of translation could be more exacting, involving not only the ordinary attention to meaning and idiom but also an endless vigilance over the transliteration of Semitic words (but why retain the German 'ä' where 'e' would be natural in English?) and the most meticulous cross-referencing. On the whole, translator and publishers together have achieved a beautiful piece of work. About the contents of the book it would be otiose to repeat the discussion of last November. But further acquaintance certainly does not reduce one's admiration for its masterly skill and its wealth of learning. It would be precious if only for all the vivid details which are brought out in the parables when they are examined by one who knows his Palestine and his Rabbinics. Regarding its thesis, this is, in the strict sense, a 'detective' story, for it is a work of 'uncovering'—taking off, layer by layer, the accretions which Professor Jeremias believes to have been deposited upon the original words of Jesus. In this, and in the

theological interpretation based on it, he is much indebted to the work of Dr. C. H. Dodd. Not all readers (as was remarked before) will be convinced by the results in detail; and the message which emerges as the authentic message of Jesus may seem truncated in some directions. But if we are not everywhere convinced, it is for us to explain why, and Professor Jeremias' extremely fully documented arguments are no easy victims for the sniper. In any future work on the teaching of Jesus, this, on the parables, will be an important factor to reckon with. 'All the parables of Jesus' says the last, brief chapter, 'compel His hearers to come to a decision about His person and mission. For they are all full of "the secret of the Kingdom of God" (Mk 4^{11}), that is to say, the recognition of "an eschatology that is in process of realization." The hour of fulfilment is come, that is the urgent note that sounds through them all.' Here is a devoutly critical book for every student to ponder and debate. Incidentally, what a boon it would be if some one would translate and publish Jeremias' '*Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu*,' which is constantly referred to, but appears to be tantalizingly unobtainable.

C. F. D. Moule

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF EARLY CHRISTIANS

Anyone who wishes to build up a picture of what life in the Early Church was like will find *Social Life of Early Christians*, by the Rev. J. G. Davies, M.A., B.D. (Lutterworth Press; 17s. 6d. net), a book of the greatest interest and the greatest value. Mr. Davies' method is to weave together material from the contemporary documents into a connected whole. The first chapter is entitled 'Rumour.' The Apologies of Minucius Felix, Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras and Theophilus of Antioch are laid under tribute to illustrate the slanders which were calculated to prevent a heathen from becoming a Christian. Here we read of how the heathen accused the Christians of being responsible for the disasters that befell the State; of practising infanticide; and of making an immoral carousal of the *Agapē*. The second chapter is entitled 'Christian Novels' and supplies us with excellent full accounts of The Acts of Paul, and The Acts of Thomas. The third chapter is an account of University life. The fourth chapter is entitled 'A Visit to the Holy Place.' This is perhaps the most useful chapter in the book because it is based on the travel diary of Egeria who visited the Holy Land towards the end of the fourth century, a document that is by no means readily accessible, and which is of very considerable interest. The sixth chapter deals with the life of St. Simeon Stylites, and is of real value because it makes use of hitherto untranslated contemporary documents. But it is the fifth chapter that is of the most vivid interest. It is entitled 'Bringing up Children' and is based on the sermon of Chrysostom and the letters of Jerome on that subject. Sculptors, when they work in marble, remove what is superfluous and add what is lacking to produce the finished work. That is how the educator ought to mould the child. The child should be encouraged to play. 'I welcome play in the young; it is a sign of a lively disposition; nor can I ever believe that he who is gloomy and in a continual state of depression is ever likely to show alertness of mind in his work.' Bathing is to be allowed for health reasons, but 'mixed bathing is prejudicious to modesty and morality.' Perfumes are to be eschewed. 'The function of the nose is to breathe pure air, not to draw in overpowering scents.' 'When he is fifteen years old it is time that the boy should hear of hell.' Adolescence brings its temptations. 'How will you set a bridle on it? I know of none except the restraint of hell fire.' The order in which the Scriptures are to be studied by the child is interesting—first the Psalms, then the Proverbs, then Ecclesiastes to teach him the vanity of earthly things, then Job to teach him patience, then the Gospels, then the Epistles, then the Prophets, then the Pentateuch, then memory work from Kings and Chronicles, then Ezra and Esther, then 'he may safely read The Song of Songs.'

This is a completely fascinating book. It combines the finest scholarship with the most vivid touch. We want more of this.

William Barclay

THE WORK OF THE CHRONICLER

The Chronicler's History of Israel: Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah Restored to Its Original Form, by Professor Charles C. Torrey (Yale University Press; $5.00).

At the time this review goes to the editor, 18th December, Professor Torrey will be celebrating his ninety-first birthday, and readers of The Expository Times will certainly join with me in expressing our most heartfelt felicitations to a scholar who has led in Old Testament studies for so long and with inimitable inspiration. Long may he be spared both to provoke and exhort.

Professor Torrey needs no introduction—he is probably the most controversial of all Biblical scholars, and in this book he has done nothing to indicate a change. He says: 'The entire picture of the Return from the Babylonian exile is absurd and impossible throughout, unworthy of any serious attention.' Topics related to its study—and they are many—merely 'reflect misunder-

standings,' for the whole literary work of the Chronicler was composed about 250 B.C., and actually deals with the Samaritan Schism, under the mask of the fiction of the Return. Professor Torrey has been saying this or something similar ever since 1896 when his book on 'The Composition and Historical Value of Ezra-Nehemiah' was published.

And people still disbelieve, for very few scholars have wholly adopted his views. Nevertheless, no one dealing with post-exilic Judaism can afford not to read seriously Professor Torrey's disputations, because, despite his unrealistic hypothesis, he has many pertinent observations to make. The present book is no exception. In the introductory pages he re-presents his general position as outlined previously in his 'Ezra Studies' [1910] and later, and makes fresh contributions to a variety of topics, such as the unity of the work, Darius the Mede, the Apocryphal Esdras, the Elephantine papyri, and others. Incidentally, lexicographers may well look again at Torrey's suggestion that '*appôm* in Ezr 4^{13} is the Greek word ἐπίθεσις 'the royal impost.'

The main body of the book, however, gives the text of Chronicles-Nehemiah 'in its original form,' according to the author's own analysis. It has meant two main changes in the disposition of the text. One is a textual dislocation in the story of Ezra, and the following order is given: Ezr 7, 8; Neh $7^{70\text{-}73a}$, 7^{73b}–8^{18}; Ezr 9, 10; Neh 9, 10. The second change is the addition of two passages from 1 Esdras. The first is the verse in 1 Esd 1^{21}, which gives an assessment of Josiah's work and is inserted in 2 Ch 35^{20}. The second consists of 1 Esd $4^{47b\text{-}56}$, 4^{62}–5^{6}, and is put at the end of the present Ezr 1, though with the substitution of the name of Cyrus for Darius. It would appear to the reviewer, however, that neither addition is very convincing: the former is rather arbitrary, and the second, even apart from the substitution of the names, deals with the restoration of Judea and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, whereas the Cyrus decree deals only with the Temple and its furniture.

It is unfortunate, too, that Professor Torrey has used for his 'restored' text the Hebrew edition of Baer—apart, of course, from his own translations of the 1 Esdras passages. Surely Kittel's 'Biblia Hebraica' [3] has now replaced all previous editions. Even so, there are some misprints in the verse enumeration, for example, 2 Ch 10^{19} 22^{3}, Ezr 4^{24}, Neh 4^{11}. The English translation, reproduced from the A.V. for 2 Ch 35 to the end, is also very artificial for a book such as this—one would think that Professor Torrey might have preferred to give his own rendering.

This is not meant as carping criticism, but as the measure of our regret that Professor Torrey has not really 'restored' the text in the way he led us to expect.

BLEDDYN J. ROBERTS

THE CELTIC CHURCH

Let no reader be put off by the narrow range of interest which the title of this book suggests. It is called *The Celtic Church in Dunblane*; but its subtitle is more appropriate—'A View of the Scottish Church from St. Ninian to the Culdees and the Coming of the Roman Catholic Church.' What we have here in fact is a sketch of the Church History of Scotland down to the twelfth century, with particular reference to the rather meagre early history of Dunblane. The book is published by the Society of Friends of Dunblane Cathedral, and the author is the distinguished senior minister of the Cathedral, the Rev. James Hutchison Cockburn, D.D., D.Theol., F.S.A. [Scot.]. The price is 15s. 9d. net.

As regards the earliest period Dr. Cockburn takes his place in the train of Dr. A. B. Scott and Dr. W. Douglas Simpson in the school of historians which holds that the fame of St. Columba swallowed up that of his predecessors and contemporaries and so deprived generations of pioneer missionaries of their due credit and distorted the whole picture of early Christianity in Scotland. He has estimated the evidence for himself, however, and he has something original to say, particularly about the widespread work of St. Blane, which he sets in the context of the times, political and ecclesiastical. As regards the Culdees, one knows of no better or more reasonable account of their rise and decline than Dr. Cockburn gives. His style is lucid and vigorous, though there is a certain amount of repetition; and while, for lack of evidence, there remains an element of conjecture in his picture, yet it is not baseless conjecture, and the general impression is convincing.

The book is well produced and there are some interesting and helpful maps and illustrations. We look forward to the author's next volume, which is to carry the story down to the Reformation.

There are misprints on pages 12, 39, 188, and 194.

STEWART MECHIE

THE BYZANTINE CHURCH

As a historian Professor Marcus Ward has a grievance—that historians in general have grossly underestimated the importance of the Byzantine Empire. Gibbon, in regarding it as merely the last unhappy phase of Roman history before the final catastrophe, was one of the earliest sinners in this respect, but even Bryce, whose classic work, 'The Holy Roman Empire,' first appeared in 1863,

did not recognize until a final edition in 1904 that his book was incomplete without a chapter on the Eastern Empire. In order, therefore, to provide a background over against this general neglect, Professor Ward thinks it necessary to devote a third of his book—*The Byzantine Church* (Lutterworth Press; 15s. net)—to secular history, showing that the millennium of independent life, after Rome had fallen, was by no means an unbroken decline towards ruin. (He holds that there were at least three *golden ages* between A.D. 330 and 1453.) But, of course, as the title indicates, his chief interest is in ecclesiastical history, and here again he regards himself as the restorer of a reputation which has been misunderstood and obscured. His view is that the world's debt to the Byzantine Church has been immense—in theology, in classical learning, in mysticism, monasticism, liturgy, and missionary effort, but our gratitude has been diminished because of our ignorance. He does not, however, run to the opposite extreme of uncritical admiration. While fully conscious of the value of the Orthodox heritage, he is not blind to its less desirable consequences. Its theology, after brilliant beginnings in exposition and creedal construction, tended to become static, and to love the past too exclusively—'loyalty to a glorious past [was] often purchased at the price of refusing to serve the present, and so failing to lay firm hold on the future.' The alliance between Church and State was so close as to be ruinous to freedom of thought, and degenerated into an Erastianism in which the evil was much greater than the good. In passing, Professor Ward makes the intriguing suggestion that the frequently anti-religious attitude of the present-day Soviet is due to a reaction against the Cæsaro-Papism of the Byzantine ancestors of the Russian Orthodox Church.

One of the most interesting chapters deals with the development of monasticism. In the Eastern Church this was a reaction not to a persecuting but to a favouring world—often an escapism through solitude, resulting in an individualism which explains why Eastern monasticism did not reach the organized and practical effectiveness of the Western type. A beautiful chapter on the Byzantine Liturgy indicates that in the author's view the most valuable contribution of the Orthodox Church was its emphasis on worship, the underlying idea being that orthodoxy means not only right thinking but a sustained attempt to realise and transmit a sense of the 'glory' of God.

As befits one who has already to his credit an admirable book on the history of the first five years of the Church of South India, Professor Ward suggests that for the naturalizing of Christianity in India much more use could be made of the historical connexion between India and the Eastern Church and of the receptive attitude towards mysticism which is common to both. We wish that he could have developed this idea more fully than he has done, for while the historical connexion may indeed be somewhat fragmentary and at times interrupted, the appeal of the mystical ideas underlying the emphasis on worship in the Eastern Church will be obvious to all who have some knowledge of the fundamental religious attitudes of India.

W. S. URQUHART

The Best of A. E. Whitham (Epworth Press; 8s. 6d. net) consists of selections from the late A. E. Whitham's three books—'The Discipline and Culture of the Spiritual Life,' 'The Pastures of His Presence,' and 'The Catholic Christ'—prefaced by a very short memoir by his daughter. A. E. Whitham had sunniness of temper, a charm of writing, a sweet sincerity, and an eye for apt illustration. The very titles of the chapters are attractive—Is Orthodoxy Dull ?, Patchwork Piety, Christianity for the Fun of It, The Gaiety of Jesus, Too Good not to be True. These are chapters which are pleasant, easy, and profitable to read, and well calculated to kindle the mind of the reader.

The New Testament: A Historical and Analytic Survey, by Merrill C. Tenney, Ph.D., Dean of the Graduate School Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois (Inter-Varsity Fellowship; 12s. 6d. net), is an attempt to discuss the New Testament books against the literary, political, social, economic, and religious backgrounds of the first century. Many of the introductory articles are informative and well written, and good judgment regarding the Canon is expressed when Dr. Tenney says that 'it was the outcome of the use of various writings which proved their merits and their unity by their inward dynamic' (p. 428). Unfortunately, however, ultra-conservative views, which have long been disputed, are accepted without adequate discussion. The Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, the Apostolic authorship of the Johannine writings, including the Apocalypse, the genuineness of 2 Peter, the knowledge of 2 Peter by Jude, are positions accepted by the author. He admits that Q might have perished after being copied extensively, but says that 'there is no good objective proof of its existence,' and thinks it enough to say that all the testimony of the Fathers from the time of Irenæus is overwhelmingly in favour of the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel. It seems a pity that the teachers, ministers, and leaders of Bible classes, for whom the book is intended, are not given sounder and better guidance.

Many readers—and not only those belonging to the Anglican Communion—will find this book—*At the Lord's Table*, by the Rev. Cosslett Quin (Lutterworth Press ; 18s. net)—a source of information and inspiration. It is written by a clergyman of the Irish Episcopal Church, and is a theological and devotional commentary on the (1662) Anglican Service of Holy Communion, sent out with the desire that it may help the celebrant to use this form *ex animo* with the fullest possible benefit to his people and himself. Occasionally the author is inclined to over-simplification and a naïve acceptance of authority, but on the whole he is broad-minded and recognises fully that though he himself may prefer to worship within an ecclesiastical building and organization hallowed by tradition, it is quite possible that there may have to be reconstructions in the not very distant future. He has some beautiful chapters which contain much sage advice and are worth reading over and over again. Ministers of any church would find the book of the greatest value in their own devotional preparations for Communion. A middle position between a doctrine of mere remembrance and a materialistic belief in the Real Presence is strengthened by the clear distinction, for example, between what is *seen* and what is *understood*, and his citation of Bridges' interpretation of 'mystery' as an 'interesting uncertainty' over against Gerald Manley Hopkins' 'incomprehensible certainty' is very relevant to his main theme. He might perhaps with advantage correct some of his over-rapid generalisations. Although both the Church of England and the Church of Scotland are established churches, the relations, for instance, between Church and State in Scotland are very different from those which obtain in England.

In *Talking Round the Calendar* (Lutterworth Press ; 6s. net) there are thirty-three addresses to children and young people. The author is the Rev. Cyril J. Davey, and he writes in the engaging way one expects from him. Mr. Davey is not content with telling a story, and then doing a little moralizing ; he turns the children's thoughts to the great spiritual truths. This month, in 'Virginibus Puerisque,' we have quoted, in shortened form, the talk for Easter, but there are many talks in this book equally good or even better.

The Doctrine of Justification by Faith (Mowbray ; 7s. 6d. net) contains five papers given at a Conference between a small group from the Community of the Resurrection, and a similar representation of the Evangelical Fellowship of Theological Literature. Differences of opinion on points of doctrine can probably be resolved more successfully by personal contact than by long-range argument, particularly when the view-points are as varied as the contributions to this volume indicate. The subject was defined as 'Justification by Faith and the Sacraments,' but the discussion covers an extremely wide field. In the Introduction, the Rev. F. J. Taylor emphasizes the apparent disappearance of the idea of Justification from modern thought, while in the following paper Canon F. W. Dillistone writes of its recovery, particularly in Niebuhr's exposition of the life of man in society and Tillich's treatment of the individual's craving for self-justification. Professor G. W. H. Lampe deals more explicitly with the doctrine of Justification in Christ in relation to Baptism and the Eucharist, and is followed by an interesting, if mainly historical and factual, account of Justification in Holy Scripture and in Later Theology by Dr. H. E. Symonds. The final contribution, by the Rev. F. H. Maycock, is in line with the belief that Incarnation and Redemption both derive from the creative purpose of God, and sees in the 'distorted' view of Justification held by both Roman and Protestant thought a concealment of this fundamental truth and the source of 'a variety of troubles from which we still suffer.'

There seems to be a general readiness to accept the view that justification by faith *alone* does not, as Dom Gregory Dix argued, involve disparagement of the Church and of the Sacraments and a purely subjective idea of faith, but that the Reformation 'battle-cry' *sola fide* was rather a protest against the notion of Justification as a reward for human effort. Beyond this a diversity of opinion, particularly as between 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' view-points, is quite conspicuous, though it is interesting to note, from the Chairman's Preface, that while the main heads of agreement and difference at the Conference could not be chronicled, 'the former were very considerable.'

These selections from his sermons—*St. Bernard on the Christian Year*, translated and edited by a Religious of the C.S.M.V. (Mowbray ; 10s. 6d. net)—have been divided into two parts, one a series on the Christian Year and another on the festivals of the greater saints. Some useful notes have been appended, mainly explanations of variations in the translation of Scripture texts. The sermons have gained by abbreviation and rearrangement, and have not, even after an interval of eight hundred years, lost their attractiveness or their value as aids to devotion. Some most beautiful passages are included, and the matter-of-factness and simplicity of the style enhance the effectiveness of the symbolism and open the doors of poetic imagination and vision.

Religious Education

Making the Scripture Lesson Relevant to Modern Life

By Margaret Avery, B.A., S.Th., London

In Britain to-day Christianity is rarely attacked but it is frequently by-passed. The main current of culture is scientific and technical, and attitudes of mind proper to scientific research have ' spilled over ' like a flood into other departments of life obliterating features of the traditional civilized landscape. Over much of the world moral values count for almost nothing. Life becomes increasingly impersonal and the individual more and more loses his individuality. The ' valuable ' people in the community are the experts on nuclear fusion and thousands of eager young men care above all else for machines. Children demand stories about adventures in space, and unscrupulous publishers provide adolescents with horror comics in which inhumanity, violence and lust are held up to admiration. So often Christianity seems remote from the machine age, especially to young people who have known no other cultural environment.

How can we make our Scripture lessons relevant to their way of life ?

In the first place we need to have *a clear idea of the essential message of the Bible* and to choose material through which essentials can be taught, discarding if time is limited what is secondary. So many boys and girls leave school without any unified knowledge or coherent conception of what Christianity is. They believe the Christian faith to be irrelevant partly because they do not understand it. The dramatic stories of the Old Testament are part of the child's heritage but there is something wrong if a boy of sixteen leaves school familiar with the wars of Joshua but unfamiliar with the prophets and unaware that these pioneers of the world of the spirit displayed a courage unmatched even by the heroes of Everest and made discoveries on which three of the world's great religions are based. Jeremiah, for instance, endured a life-long martyrdom with no hope of immortal life (in any effective sense) and with no sympathetic public to applaud his progress. The underlying assumptions of prophecy—that God is sovereign, accessible and that He desires to commune with man and deliver him from evil—are desperately relevant to the lives of our pupils. Not only the heroism of the prophets but their visions and their insight make a strong appeal, as does their passion for justice and the deliverance of the oppressed. Children find no difficulty in understanding that Amos denounced cheats and ' spivs ' and that he would have many things to say to us. In such a course, whether in day school or Sunday school, opportunity could be given for frank discussion of how man may know God and the validity of such knowledge and its relevance to life.

Another way of showing the relevance of religion to life is to insist on the unity of all knowledge and to relate the material of the Scripture lesson to other branches of knowledge. Children tend to isolate the subjects of the curriculum, especially at the Secondary stage, when each is associated with a different member of staff. This attitude must be broken down. They need to learn that Nebuchadnezzar, for example, who is encountered in 2 Kings is the same Nebuchadnezzar whom they meet in studying history. The memoirs of Nehemiah are as good history as the memoirs of Julius Cæsar. Jesus came into the middle of history and cut it in two : no reputable historian now denies that He lived and that His influence has affected our history and culture at every point. Christianity will continue to be irrelevant as long as the Bible is regarded as unrelated to the rest of human experience. The quality of the history teaching in any school is vitally important for the teaching of religion. It can awaken the imagination to see that all that is past is alive in the present.

It is important, however, not to claim all the Biblical record as history nor to depreciate the spiritual factor that makes it unique. We can show that the Bible is relevant to-day because the revelation of God it enshrines speaks with the same power to every generation : God does not change nor does human nature. Behind us is the Resurrection and we live, even in the machine age, in the era of the Holy Spirit.

The continuity and relevance of Christianity in every age, including our own, is best taught through Church History, which is being recognized increasingly in the curriculum of both day and Sunday schools. Even in a short course it is possible to show the main epochs of the Church's development and to make the lives of a few great Christians stand out vividly against the background of their times. Such a study will show that the gospel remains essentially the same through the centuries, though emphasis and methods of evangelism may

vary. Cultures may vary but saintliness and the struggle to interpret the facts are constant. One would not, of course, expect our younger or less intelligent pupils to grasp all this, but everyone is attracted by a great personality, especially if the characters chosen for study make a natural appeal. Children of seven, always animal lovers, will delight in St. Giles or St. Bridget: children of nine or ten in St. Boniface, who thought nothing of crossing the North Sea in a cockleshell and usefully employed his great strength and stature in cutting down trees. At thirteen they can appreciate the triumphant gentleness of St. Margaret or St. Aidan, the gay holiness of Francis Xavier, the many-sided wisdom of John Wesley or the brilliance and devotion of Albert Schweitzer. The same Christian types recur. One suspects that Anselm would find himself at home in the company of William Temple or the Bishop of Durham, or Origen in that of C. H. Dodd or the numerous Robinsons on our library shelves. Church History has been called a 'cordial for drooping spirits': to convince boys and girls of the perennial vitality of Christianity is one of the best ways of showing its relevance to modern life. And the study should conclude with some reference to Evanston and the ecumenical movement, for our unhappy divisions are now, as always, a stumbling block to the young.

The point at which Christianity seems most irrelevant to many to-day is its moral standards. Moral laws have been repeatedly broken in every century: not till now, however, in Christian times, have they been regarded as a matter of choice or expediency. 'Why should I not do this or that? What do you mean by right or wrong?'—these are natural questions in a world of shifting values. Is there anything we can do to make Christian moral teaching relevant?

Would it perhaps be possible to give some categorical ethical teaching in the Junior schools more bluntly than is at present fashionable? I do not mean that we should spoil our Bible stories by unnecessary moralizing—the stories usually speak for themselves—but that the content of the Ten Commandments and the Two Great Commandments should be clearly taught. Children may learn these elsewhere but it is quite likely that they will not. We need to teach the Law as well as the gospel, because our pupils, unlike those of Jesus, do not already know the Law. It is difficult to teach because abstractions make little appeal and appropriate illustrations will be needed at every stage, and also because pious moralizing can so easily become tedious. The instruction should be crisp and practical.

At the adolescent stage everything hinges on a vivid presentation of the figure of our Lord. If He is seen to be worthy of allegiance, His words will have their proper weight. Further, there must be the frankest discussion when necessary of the reasons for Christian morality which will be seen to have no meaning apart from God. The Sermon on the Mount is often taught as a broadcast address instead of a charge to those who already believed in God and drew upon His resources. At the same time our teaching must include a frank recognition that the Church has no monopoly of the Holy Spirit and that there is much moral excellence outside it, though it may well claim to be the nursery of the 'fruit of the spirit.' Discussion must play a large part in the ethical instruction of older pupils and it must be ruthlessly frank as well as anchored to the New Testament.

Finally, *what of the widely held view that science has made Christianity irrelevant?* Rather superficial championship of this fallacy is extremely common in youth clubs and sixth forms.

The first requirement here is a better understanding of science as one approach to truth, but only one among other valid modes of experience. The mystic and the artist have as much right to be heard as the physicist or psychologist. Excessive specialization, in science as in any other department of study, does not necessarily lead to truth; it may so blind the seeker to all aspects but one that other sides of his personality atrophy and he becomes too one-sided a human being to be able to see straight. Our schools and universities can help here in two ways: first, by seeing that scientists are adequately grounded in the humanities and that our theologians and graduates in Arts know something of the discoveries of modern science; secondly, by making the science teaching of our schools as up-to-date as possible, so that pupils studying science may be aware of new trends. Much is said in the name of science which is hopelessly out-of-date. The 'man in the street' is often a generation behind in his confident determinism, unaware that recent advances, especially in physics, have revolutionized scientific thought. It is he, rather than the genuine scientist, who dismisses an unexplored faith in a cavalier fashion that is basically unscientific. In school or church or club it is a great help to the adolescent if religion is adequately taught by a specialist in science. The attempt to treat the opening of Genesis as a scientific account of Creation has been a hindrance to the acceptance of the Christian faith, an unnecessary stumbling block. Yet in this ancient parable, as well as in the Psalms and Job, our pupils can be helped to see the hand of God behind the mysterious complexity of the world revealed by science. The true scientist, like the man of faith, retains the gift of wonder. Science has enlarged our thought of God.

The Mari Letters

By Cyril J. Gadd, British Museum

Little has yet been published in this country to draw general attention to a very remarkable literary discovery made in the course of French archæological work in the mid 'thirties, and therefore the books listed below,[1] although the cuneiform texts are of interest only to specialists, may be named as the principal sources for a short description, which follows, of a correspondence as interesting as it is voluminous belonging to one of the most famous periods of ancient history. If it may be assumed that the Amarna Letters, known since the 1880's, are in some degree familiar outside the circle of professed ancient historians, it is time that the Mari Letters, certainly of comparable interest, should no longer remain a title conveying nothing to informed readers, who now have access to these documents through the admirable French translations so promptly furnished by Professor Georges Dossin and his collaborators.

Mari was the name of a very ancient Babylonian city situated far outside the restricted homeland of Sumerian culture in Southern Iraq, although it shared that culture fully, and was the seat of a dynasty recorded in the Sumerian 'king-list.' But none of its early rulers bore Sumerian names, and its speech was doubtless Semitic from the first historical times. There had formerly existed some evidence that its site was at Tell Ḥariri near the Euphrates, about seven miles from the modern town of Abu Kamal, and this was confirmed by the discovery of inscribed statues there in 1933 and 1934. Syria being then under French mandate, the decision was taken in Paris to excavate this important site, and six winter campaigns of digging by M. André Parrot of the Louvre, terminated by the War (but since renewed), produced a series of outstanding discoveries, architectural, archaeological, and literary, of which only the last is to be noticed here. Some twenty thousand inscribed clay tablets are said to have been found in various chambers of the vast palace built by kings of Mari in the eighteenth century B.C., and a large proportion of these, found mainly in two rooms, are letters which proved to be the political and administrative correspondence of four local kings with their princely contemporaries, allies or rivals, with members of their families, or with subordinates. Their age was the 'Old Babylonian' period, identified in modern ideas with the epoch of Hammurabi, King of Babylon, the lawgiver, whose reign is variously placed by recent writers early or late in the eighteenth century B.C. The year-dates of this ruler already proved that he had made two successful, and the last annihilating, attacks upon Mari. It is not the least among the manifold interests of the Mari Letters that they include several communications from and to Hammurabi himself and many more references to his policy, his actions, and even his actual words, sent by ambassadors and officers in close touch with him at his own court. Anticipating the general effect of these, it may be said that he emerges from their testimony with such clarity that the majestic but vague figure of tradition necessarily loses something of its apparent stature.

About five hundred of these State letters have as yet been published and translated in the books upon which this survey is founded, and a few more in journals. This is already sufficient to paint a most vivid picture embracing a great part of the whole ancient world of Western Asia in rather more than half a century of a momentous period. Four kings of Mari are concerned, belonging to two different houses, and a group of other rulers over countries and towns, great or less. Among them are some old and some new names, Hammurabi of Babylon and Rim-Sin of Larsa, but also other Hammurabis and certain important Syrian dynasts unknown before, kings of Carchemish and especially of Aleppo, reputed by sagacious politicians of the time as the most powerful of all. Here it is not possible to do more than name the limits of the geographical setting; it extends from the country of Elam (South-west Iran) in the east as far as the north of Palestine, including not only Babylonia, the Euphrates lands, and Syria, but also lands east of the Tigris and especially Assyria, which indeed takes one of the principal parts in this drama. A very noticeable absentee from the world of the Mari Letters is Egypt, of which not a

[1] Musée du Louvre: *Textes cunéiformes*, tomes xxii–xxvi. *Archives Royales de Mari*, i–v, par G. Dossin, Ch.-F. Jean, J.-R. Kupper. (Paris: Geuthner). *Archives Royales de Mari*, i: *Correspondance de Šamši-Addu*, par Georges Dossin; ii: *Lettres diverses*, par Charles-F. Jean; iii: *Correspondance de Kibri-Dagan*, par J.-R. Kupper; iv: *Correspondance de Šamši-Addu*, par Georges Dossin; v: *Correspondance de Iasmaḫ-Addu*, par Georges Dossin (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale); [vi: *Correspondance de Baḫdi-Lim*, par J.-R. Kupper, has now appeared, but is not included in this survey].

single mention has yet been found—whatever the position in Syria enjoyed by the Pharaohs of the Middle Kingdom, all trace of their influence had vanished in the eighteenth century. Hardly less remarkable, and hardly less in contrast with the Amarna Letters, is the non-appearance of the Hittites at this time. It was the age of the early kings of Hatti, remote and struggling rulers over a local domain in Asia Minor, unknown to the world outside.

With but few exceptions the Mari Letters circulated in a world of Semitic princes, mostly petty, though several kingdoms intermittently commanded a measure of authority abroad by wavering conquests and alliances among their neighbours. These princes, to judge by their names, belonged predominantly to a particular branch of the Semitic family known generally as Amorites, the people who flowed in as the second wave of Semitic migrants to cover Syria and Mesopotamia, the first having been the Akkadians. Names of this kind were already known from Babylonia and one or two other places, their best-known representatives being in the dynasty of Hammurabi himself, but Mari has revealed the pervasion of Amorites over the whole of Western Asia, and has confirmed their habit of not using in speech, or at any rate in writing, the Semitic dialect which their names imply, but the classical Akkadian language of Babylonia; the Mari Letters are written (with but slight differences) in the orthography, the grammar, and the vocabulary of the Hammurabi Code and other literary texts of the Old-Babylonian period. In the cities, Amorite rulers were certainly immigrant usurpers of rule over older communities — Samsi-Adad himself in Assyria was such an one, and so was the Hammurabi dynasty in Babylon—but the Mari Letters show also Amorite tribesmen in the half-settled condition, inhabiting districts rather than cities. Most important and most interesting of these were the Beni-Iamina, whose name it is impossible not to compare with the later Israelite tribe of Benjamin, both meaning 'sons of the south.' This is the more curious in both cases because in neither did they sojourn in the south; Benjamin was a northern tribe, and the Beniamina of the Mari Letters infested the wide lands along the Euphrates up to the Balikh and south of Harran, being thus directly to the north of Mari. How this anomalous situation arose both in Mesopotamia and in Israel is a puzzle yet unsolved. It is emphasized in the Mari Letters by the existence of another tribe called the Beni-simal, *i.e.*, 'Bensimalites' or 'sons of the north,' whose location is less well defined. But these were not all, for the people of Khana, of Sutu, and those named Beni-Wilanim were all alike in presenting the familiar problems of nomads to the agents of settled governments. They were elusive; 'the Benjaminites,' writes the Assyrian king, 'are not suitable for conscription. If you do it their brethren the Rabbai who live on the other side (of the Euphrates) will hear of it and take it ill,' so authority must content itself with an appeal and suitable threats to raise a contingent from the tribe. In spite of which at another time it was successfully managed, 'their shaykhs have come in, I have appointed registrars for them, and they have listed the men.' Military service was the ordinary requirement from the tribes, and it gave continual trouble; an officer charged with 'an urgent affair' informs his master that he cannot bring the recruits together, it will take three more days to assemble them. So he suggests 'let them cut off the head of an offender and parade it round the villages'—this will get them together quickly. Even to raise labour for the harvest was sometimes impossible: 'I sent to the Benjaminite villages' for a labour force of lads and girls 'but the shaykh gave me this answer, "Let the enemy come and carry us away from our village." In fact, at the harvest, nobody in the Benjaminite villages has given me any help.' However, when it suited they could come willingly enough even upon military service. 'Now another thing,' reports a commander, 'on all the marches I took notice, and there was a lot of grousing, but on this march I took notice, and there was no grousing or anything but laughter and pleasure, as though they were at home.' Evidently they went too far sometimes with their obstinacy, for the grim old king of Assyria sent some orders of a sufficiently drastic tenour, 'in your registration of them don't humour them,' and even once, 'there will be no peace with Wilanum, and I now tell you to seize them . . . give orders that they are to die in the night . . . let graves be dug for them, let them die and be buried.' Despite all these difficulties they were indispensable: 'send to the Beni-Simal and Iamin that they may aid you,' and give them half of the store of rations and clothing each month. But in any case, writes another, 'they are brigands; (let us hope) they seize nothing and commit no crimes.' A serious highway robbery and murder was committed by a band on the road to Elakhut, when two merchants, eleven of their servants and a slave girl were slain, and ten others of the party got away—all this for no more than a consignment of special timber and the draught animals which carried it.

Samsi-Adad (or Shamshi-Addu) of Assyria has already been mentioned as an usurper of the throne in that country. A mere shadow hitherto, he now lives in the Mari Letters not only as the leading figure of his age but as a clear and most

vigorous individual. He was reigning, it was known before and is now confirmed, during the early years of Hammurabi's rule at Babylon, and was then undoubtedly the leading figure in Western Asia as a whole, possibly suzerain of Hammurabi himself. The king of Babylon was to outlive the king of Assyria and succeed, in some measure, to his empery, but the Mari Letters would leave no doubt which was the greater man, if it were not remembered that they limn a full-length portrait of the one and sketch only glimpses of the other. Many examples might be quoted of the Assyrian king's political judgment, military capacity, control of detail, and despotic temper, but it happens that the last is at once of most human interest and the most amply displayed in his letters, since all of these (over one hundred have been published) were written to his second son, Iasmakh-Adad, whom he had appointed to rule over Mari following his conquest of the city. At the same time his elder son, Ishme-Dagan, was exercising a similar deputy rule over the city of Ekallatum ('The Palaces'), as yet undiscovered, but supposed to lie upon the Tigris below the city of Ashur. This trinity of rulers is portrayed with remarkable and sometimes amusing detail in the correspondence which they liberally exchanged, for there are letters not only from the father, and a number of replies to him, but between the brothers. Samsi-Adad was a formidable correspondent; his letters were not only long and explicit but carried candour to the point of scolding. He had, too, an ominous habit, most uncommon at that time, of dating his letters precisely, 'I despatched this letter to you from Nineveh on the 9th of Ayyar in the evening,' with the too evident purpose of seeing that appropriate action was taken in the time he thought proper. His sons, or at least the younger, were kept on a tight rein, and had little scope for initiative, the father's letters being usually replete with precise instructions. Their tone is peremptory and chiding, for the writer seems imbued with the idea that his second son was a poor creature, in pitiful contrast with his brother, who is held up as a shining example. A district officer has overtaxed a province for tribute; Iasmakh-Adad forwards his report and the man's excuse—'he must have a silver-mine in his district,' replies the old king caustically, and gives directions for a regular gathering of the levy. Then, losing patience, 'and as for you how long must we lead you? Are you a boy, not a man? Have you no hair on your cheeks? How long will it be before you can command your house? Why don't you look at your brother, who commands vast armies?' When once the son asked for the disposal of the revenues of a town, the father answered him drily, 'I shall give that town to somebody with the vigour and strength to keep it.' Another letter was still more disagreeable: your brother here has won a great victory, captured a province, killed a famous general, 'and you there are lying among the women! Now when you go with the army to Qatanum, do be a man!' Send back two of your cooks with my messenger, orders the old tyrant, and roundly declares that his son has passed on to him a cock-and-bull story at third hand, 'in those matters there is not a word of truth'; someone told it to A. and he wrote it to B., and 'the whole of those things is nonsense.' But worse than all this, 'let (three men) hear this tablet read in your presence: I have taken the young daughter of Iskhi-Adad for you (to wife).' He goes on to announce that the paltry settlement proposed is beneath the dignity of both parties, and he intends to make it five talents of silver, 'and I shall add a work of art.' This led to much coming and going; Samsi-Adad misses the post and sends after the messenger, encloses his own final reply to the father-in-law and bids his son copy it out for himself and 'write some compliments (of your own) and forward it.' Then he commands the young man's appearance at the Assyrian residence with a suitable train, instead of a different place to which he had first been directed. As if all this were not too much, the unfortunate Iasmakh-Adad had to receive letters from his wonderful brother announcing his own victories, 'I have slain the general and the tribe of the Wilanum; all of them are slain, all their servants and soldiers are slain; there is not an enemy has escaped: rejoice!'—he was for ever being bidden to rejoice at the very events which would be cast in his teeth by a heavy father and a complacent brother. We have two imperfect drafts of letters which Iasmakh-Adad began in protest against his father's tirades, but they were evidently not sent: perhaps his heart failed at the last moment.

Despite all this they were upon the whole a united family. Samsi-Adad sometimes condescends to praise what his son has done, the two brothers exchange confidential letters, and the attempt of a cheat to embroil the three was thwarted by their mutual loyalty. A question arose whether it would be advisable to ask the old man for a town which the governor of Mari wanted in his domain? Ishme-Dagan thought not, but gave a guarded reply at first, whereupon his brother wrote again asking for his real opinion, and Ishme-Dagan replied frankly that their father was then too much disgusted with his younger son to make it any good asking at the moment, but 'as soon as you have firmly established Mari and Tuttul, then ask the king for that town, and he will give it you gladly; I am sending you (real) brotherly advice,'

without thought of self-interest. When Ishme-Dagan succeeded to the throne he wrote (and there is no reason to suspect his sincerity) a very cordial letter of announcement to his brother, professing all good feeling, disclaiming hostile ambition, and offering to join in a mutual oath of lasting brotherhood. Upon the whole one may suspect that the father's irate effusions give too low an opinion of his younger son, lower perhaps than he entertained himself in his cooler mood. Iasmakh-Adad doubtless spent too much money upon horses and servants, perhaps upon women, but he was not wholly imbecile even as a soldier, for he had his victories too, which are recounted in the letters, and certainly he, or his Secretaries of State, was assiduous enough in affairs and correspondence. However, the verdict of history is against him, for his rule scarcely outlasted his father's support, and soon after that was removed Mari fell from the usurper's hands, and the heir of the old royal house regained the throne of his fathers. The new king of Assyria maintained his own position with difficulty, after the old despot was gone, but could do nothing to help his brother in distant and disaffected Mari; the 'Assyrian interregnum' there was ended. [*To be continued.*

Contributions and Comments

An Alleged Semitism

Principal M. Black in *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* [Second Edition, 1954], 83, claims that a characteristic feature of Semitic usage in the Gospels and Acts is the repetition of a preposition before every noun of a series which it governs. He writes: 'The construction is intolerable in literary Greek.'

This latter statement is incorrect. Quoting at random, we may cite Homer, *Iliad*, iv. 163: *κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν*. Thucydides, i. 7: *ἐν ταῖς νήσοις καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἠπείροις*. i. 24: *κατά τε γῆν καὶ κατὰ θάλασσαν*. Philo, *Leg. All.*, iii. 86: *χαίρομεν γὰρ ἐπὶ ὑγείᾳ καὶ ἐπ-ἐλευθερίᾳ καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ τιμῇ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις*.

It follows that the feature to which Principal Black (following Wensinck) draws attention is not necessarily evidence of Semitism at all.

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Zechariah x. 11a

וְעָבַר בַּיָּם צָרָה

The syntax of this sentence provides a problem as is to be seen by the different translations of the text. The LXX has read already בַּיָּם, taking צָרָה as an adjective, and has translated it by: *ἐν θαλάσσῃ στενῇ*. And in the same manner the vetus Itala: *per mare angustum*.

In modern times some read בַּיָּם, regard צָרָה as a noun, and translate: 'the sea of affliction' (American Standard Version). The phrase occurs, however, nowhere else; therefore it is difficult to fix the right meaning. The guess that it is the Red Sea,[1] is in any case unconvincing.[2] Others see the solution of the problem in a conjecture. But the best emendation hitherto offered has been proved unsatisfactory.[3]

Therefore I suggest that we read בְּיוֹם instead of בַּיָּם. Already the occurrence of בַּיָּם again, three words further on in the sentence, arouses our suspicion. Palæographically—the daghesh forte in the yodh of the traditional text is perhaps an indication of the lost waw: the copier regards the ו as a י and inserts the daghesh to indicate the doubling. Before the following ם the ו could also easily have been neglected—and grammatically—we find the combination בְּיוֹם צָרָה elsewhere, for example, Jer 16^{19}, Ob$^{12.\ 14}$, Nah 1^{7}, Ps 20^{2} 50^{15}, Pr 24^{10} 25^{19}—this emendation is easily accounted for.

The sudden change from direct to indirect speech in *v.*[11] is 'in accordance with the Hebrew usage allowing such rapid transitions.'[4] But the reading of the LXX (*διελεύσονται*)—the third person plural instead of the third singular: the returning exiles being the subject of עָבְרוּ—is preferable.

Thus I reconstruct the sentence: וְעָבְרוּ בְיוֹם צָרָה, 'And they will pass over in a day of affliction.' The sense is obvious: the return of the exiles will happen in a time of affliction.

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[1] Cf. G. Smit, *De Kleine Profeten*, deel iii. [Groningen 1926], 156.

[2] See *Die Studiekring*, Tydskrif vir die Bevordering van die Studie van die Heilige Skrif in die Grondtale, Eerste Jaargang, Aflewering 5 [Junie, 1951], 34.

[3] *Ib.*

[4] T. W. Chambers, *The Book of Zechariah* [1874], 79.

The Miracle at Cana

The Rev. P. A. Illingworth's suggestion about the Miracle in Cana (The Expository Times, lxv. [June, 1954] 287) is by no means a new one. The view that the words of Jesus 'Draw out now' (*ἀντλήσατε νῦν*) were a command to draw out from the well was put forward by B. F. Westcott in his Commentary. J. H. Bernard in his Commentary in the *I.C.C.* treats the matter at length and gives reasons against Westcott's view.

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The Injunctions of Silence in Mark's Gospel

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The so-called 'Messianic Secret' in the Gospels has claimed the attention of many scholars of different schools during the half century since Wrede published his monograph on the subject. But it is not merely an academic question. The ordinary Christian believer, so often exhorted to make open confession of Christ and to tell others of His benefits, is apt to be puzzled by the fact that Jesus Himself apparently enjoined silence on many who confessed Him or were helped by Him.

This is often held to be due to a special theory which Mark is alleged to have invented, or taken over, to account for the general failure of Jesus' contemporaries to recognise His Messiahship—the theory that Jesus Himself did not wish it recognized during His lifetime, and therefore imposed silence on any who penetrated the secret. Only, Mark for some reason forgot to be consistent about it, often omitting the injunction of silence, and in other passages including what seems a definite claim on Jesus' part to be the Messiah. Those who find it difficult to credit Mark with such extraordinary naïvety may well be more impressed by an account like that of Dr. Austin Farrer, who intriguingly fits the supposed contradictions into a completely consistent pattern of (partial) veilings and unveilings prefiguring the great veiling and unveiling in the death and resurrection of Christ.[1] Our concern here, however, is not so much with literary or historical criticism. It is rather to seek an explanation which both allows consistency to Mark's narrative and also has a practical bearing on Christian life and thought.

(1) Of the three groups into which the relevant passages may conveniently be divided, the first, and the simplest to account for, is that in which the demoniacs, or rather the evil powers who control them, recognize Jesus for what He is, and are at once sharply rebuked for saying so (1$^{24.\ 34}$ 3^{11}). To suggest that He merely resented the divulging of His secret to the crowd is surely a little unrealistic. For they were hardly likely to take very seriously the ravings of a demented creature—nor, apparently, did they do so, for their reaction seems in fact to have been merely 'amazement' at Jesus' authority over unclean spirits (1^{27}). It is much more probable that what roused His anger was not the confession itself, but that it should be made *by them*—unclean spirits who, for all that, still remained unclean and fundamentally hostile to Him.

[1] *A Study in St. Mark*, 221 ff.

In that case, an appropriate commentary would be: 'The devils also believe, and tremble. But . . . faith without works is dead' (Ja 2$^{19f.}$). And the present bearing of these episodes is surely obvious. They contain the ever-relevant warning that the highest-sounding confession, without change and newness of life, is a work of the devil and better not made at all. They are also a piece of testimony charged with all the promise of the gospel: that here, in Jesus, is the Lord who can silence the hollow phrases and work the practical change.

(2) The second group comprises four healing miracles, after each of which Jesus sternly forbids the publishing of what has happened (1^{44} 5^{43} 7^{36} 8^{26}). Here what He seeks to prevent is clearly not a non-committal, if true, confession, but a false or superficial one which represents Him primarily as a great wonder-worker and healer of bodily ills. For Himself that was peculiarly embarrassing: for example, the result of the Leper's disobedience (1$^{44f.}$) was that He was forced out into 'desert places' surrounded by masses seeking miraculous cures—and so perpetuating the temptation He had wrestled with 'in the desert' at the outset, and again in the 'solitary place' after the healings of Capernaum (1^{35}). But the effect on the people was even more disastrous. When, for example, the cure of the deaf-mute (7$^{36f.}$) was published after all, it caused only idle, if extreme, 'amazement' coupled with a pathetic echo of the Creation story: 'He hath done [made] all things well' (cf. Gn 1^{31})—so near were they to recognizing the Bringer of the New Creation, and yet so miserably far from it. It is therefore not surprising that if, in His mercy, He had responded to men's needs, He should also forbid such publicity as would only hinder Him and harden them.

That does not mean He must invariably have imposed silence. Sometimes the sense of embarrassment and temptation is expressed in another way—for example, by the immediate dismissal of the Five Thousand and withdrawal for a season of prayer (6$^{45f.}$; cf. 8$^{9f.}$); or by the hurried cure of the epileptic child before a proper crowd could gather, and the subsequent remark about the religious discipline involved (9$^{25.\ 29}$). Sometimes misunderstanding is guarded against, not by urging silence but by underlining the correct interpretation—thus the cure of the palsied man is explicitly a sign of power to forgive sins (2^{10}), or special emphasis is laid on the connexion of a particular

cure with faith (5^{34} 7^{29} 10^{52}). In two cases there is neither an injunction of silence nor any other sign of reticence or uneasiness. But neither was there any danger of the usual reaction—those who witnessed the cure of the withered hand ($3^{1ff.}$) did not crowd excitedly round Jesus but 'went forth, and straightway took counsel . . . how they might destroy him'; while Legion's compatriots did not clamour for more wonders but asked Him to go and leave them alone ($5^{14f.}$). This last story, indeed, is peculiarly instructive. For here, instead of damping a false enthusiasm, it was necessary to break down the frightened hostility of men who apparently valued property above persons, and to *create* an enthusiasm which was entirely lacking. So on this occasion Jesus actually commands Legion to publish the matter—adding, significantly enough, that what he is to recount is no mere tale of miraculous power but the wonder of the Lord's *compassion* (5^{19}). It is interesting too that although Mark does not here refer, like Luke (Lk 8^{40}), to the subsequent more favourable reception of Jesus in this region, he does later tell of a return to the same district ($7^{31ff.}$; cf. 5^{20}). And now, finding it is the false enthusiasm that has been created after all, He accedes as usual to the request for healing (the deaf-mute), but immediately adds the familiar charge to 'tell no man.'

In view of all this, it is surely plain that the omissions of the command to keep silence are not, as is often held, an inconsistency or oversight, but really corroborate the explanation we have given. Jesus was not making a secret of His Messiahship, to which His every word and deed testified clearly enough for any who had 'eyes to see.' But the people did not 'see'; and He did not wish what were really acts of Divine compassion to be made the basis of a reputation for satisfying the curiosity or the selfish interests of men. Where there was no danger of this, there is no injunction of silence. But where the reputation was likely to gain currency, He sought to combat it, whether by imposing silence, or by withdrawing Himself, or by explicitly emphasizing the real issue. For those who sought Him on that ground were a constant temptation and embarrassment to Him. And although He would not for that reason reject them, it was painfully clear that their concentration on mere outward events rendered them blinder than ever to the real significance of what was happening.

This has an important bearing on the modern theological debate, where we often find the same sort of concentration on the benefactions of Christ. The dictum of Melanchthon that the knowledge of Christ is given in the knowledge of His benefits (*hoc est Christum cognoscere—beneficia eius cognoscere*) recently became a veritable war-cry—particularly with the Ritschlians—and has now been made fundamental also by Bultmann. The motive is doubtless good, as presumably it was also with those who published their cure. For one thing, the insistence on practical benefits is meant to be a safeguard against any tendency to think of Christ abstractly in Himself and so turn Him into an ideal Figure out of all contact with the everyday world. In Bultmann's case it would also seem that, although he repudiates the title of apologist, part of his intention is to secure a measure of agreement on the nature of our experience, in order to lead on to Christ as its Source and Ground. But whatever the motive, the result is still, as of old, to obscure the true nature of Christ. Sometimes He is hidden altogether, and we seem to have man alone with his conscience (Ritschl) or his understanding of himself (Bultmann). At other times He is quite definitely brought on the scene. Yet He appears in such a manner that one often wonders how far this is, ultimately, more than an ethical ideal in the one case, or in the other a symbol of our transition from unreal to real existence—an ideal and a symbol which could, if necessary, be dispensed with in favour of something else, as easily as the crowd could have exchanged Jesus of Nazareth for some other wonder-worker. There can be no doubt that both the Ritschlians and Bultmann are anxious to give Christ the place demanded by a Christian theology as distinct from moral or existentialist philosophy. It is equally plain that they have so far succeeded as to be beyond the reach of any cheap and easy criticism. Yet considerable ambiguity remains, and one feels it might have saved a great deal of trouble and confusion if more attention had been paid at the outset to the old injunction of silence—as a warning that, whatever is to be said of Him, He cannot with impunity be approached primarily from the standpoint of human needs and blessings. If it is wrong to speak abstractly of Christ apart from His benefits, it is equally wrong to speak of them except as *His* benefits. And if the two cannot properly be separated, yet the order is surely important: first, Christ must be recognized for what He is, and only then can His benefits be understood. To reverse that order and make human needs, as they appear to us, the basis for our description of the Christ who satisfies them, is almost inevitably to misunderstand both. It was so then, when the crowds flocked to Him for healing, without realizing either who He was or what sort of healing they really required. And it is not surprising if our proneness to the same attitude, whether as theologians or as simple believers, should still have a confusing and cramping effect. Silence might be better than such confusion. But better still, since silence is hardly possible,

would be to change the order in which we normally think. And if we are apparently as little able to do that as they then were, it should be noticed that He still did not cast them off. He kept His distance: He 'did not commit himself to them' (Jn 2^{24}) but 'spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him . . . lest they should throng him' (Mk 3^{9}). Yet He was still there, and He was still the Christ, satisfying many of their apparent needs as well as others to which they were blind, and preparing to provide, in His death and resurrection, the basis of an unhindered fellowship in which there would be no more dubiety as to who He is or what He comes to bring. Thus this group of passages, too, contains not only warning but also promise. We are not merely confronted by an impossible demand either to keep silent or to reverse our normal order of thinking, with its basis in self-interest and its result in blindness to the truth: we are pointed rather to the Christ by whose grace blind eyes can be opened and right thinking becomes possible.

(3) With the disciples it is a little different. Peter's confession at Cæsarea Philippi ($8^{27ff.}$) was surely more than the excited acclamations of those who had experienced or witnessed the power of a great wonder-worker, and saw no further than that. It was more, too, than the mere lip-service of the unclean spirits, for it was the confession of one committed to personal discipleship. And if, for all that, Jesus' immediate response is the same stern command to keep silence, then it can hardly be either because Peter had failed to recognize the truth, or because he was determined to oppose it. But the reason this time is not far to seek. For it is clear that although Peter had seen and welcomed the truth, he had not yet adequately grasped its meaning. Indeed, he had hardly made the confession when he was trying to interpret it according to his own ideas of what Messiahship must imply, censuring Jesus for speaking of it in ways which would not fit into this framework, and thereby showing not only that he had not yet understood the truth he professed, but that after all his practical relation to it was still that of a 'satan' (*v.* 33)—*i.e.*, an adversary—not indeed in intention, but in fact.

It is much the same when Peter's human confession presently receives Divine corroboration at the Transfiguration ($9^{2ff.}$). The three disciples are granted a vision of the glory of Jesus, conversing with Moses and Elijah as the Fulfiller of the Law and the Prophets, and proclaimed by a Voice from the cloud (which marks God's own presence; cf. Ex 24^{16}, etc.) to be the 'beloved Son' whom they are now to hear. There can be no question here of falsehood or superficiality, for this is a Divine revelation. Nor can there be any question of the disciples' desire to make some practical response, however inadequate (*v.* 5). But again they are charged to keep the matter to themselves meantime. For it is a brief flash of illumination, suddenly gone again (*v.* 8) without being properly understood or assimilated. It hangs fire, so to speak, leaving them still powerless to help the epileptic child ($9^{14ff.}$). And just how little they had understood it is shown by the ensuing wrangle about which is to be greatest in the approaching Kingdom ($9^{33f.}$). Luke, indeed, goes on to tell how two of them so misconceived the true spirit of the vision as to suggest that now, when Jesus was about to be 'received up,' He should imitate one of the last reported acts of Elijah before his assumption (Lk $9^{51ff.}$; cf. 2 K $1^{9ff.}$). Obviously they still had much to learn before they could grasp the true nature of the Messiahship which Peter had confessed, the manner of the 'exodus' (translated 'decease' in the A.V.) which Luke says was the subject of His conversation with Moses and Elijah (Lk 9^{31}), and the method of His being 'received up.' For this, not all the concentrated teaching of Jesus reproduced in this part of the gospel story was sufficient: it was a lesson that could only be learned by being lived through. Their own conceptions of Messiahship belonged to the ideal realm of abstract theory, and must be shattered and remade in the world of men before what they now knew could become alive and meaningful, and ripe for propagation. Only when the 'exodus' had been completed, and they had been led out of bondage to the hopes and aspirations to which they were all but irrevocably thirled, would they be able to uphold the truth they had as yet only perceived—and to be upheld by it. Only after His 'assumption' would they (like Elijah's disciple of old) be endowed with their Master's Spirit—in such measure as would enable them to proclaim Christ both with understanding and with power. So they are told meantime to say nothing of what they know 'until the Son of man is risen from the dead' (Mk 9^{9}).

The situation here is not really so problematical as is often assumed. Thus it is usually asked why the disciples were so consternated by the subsequent events if Jesus had foretold them in such detail. And this has been felt to contain something of a dilemma: either they did not know what was to happen, in which case the predictions of the Passion must have been edited or invented later, or else they were so preternaturally obtuse that Jesus' warnings were really pointless. But was the trouble not simply that they were too full of their own ideas of Messiahship to take in even the most detailed of predictions? It is not easy to fill a vessel that is already full, or to teach those who already 'know.' It was akin to the proverbial

difficulty of explaining blue to a blind man—or, say, love and marriage to a young Hollywood fan. And it was all the more difficult in view of the uniqueness of what was here to be explained. But explanation is not futile if the blind man is about to be cured, or the youngster presently to fall in love: it will rather help him to find his bearings in the strange new world. And according to John this was precisely Jesus' reason for explaining what He knew would not yet penetrate: 'Now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe' (Jn 14^{29}). Before it happens, they are too prejudiced to anticipate the manner of His 'going away and coming again,' however plainly He speaks of it. While it is happening they will still be able to see in it only the appalling frustration of their cherished hopes, leaving them empty and lost. But when it is all over there will be room for what He has said to take hold of them at last, in confirmation of the new faith He has returned to bestow.

Here again, then, Jesus was not trying to keep His Messiahship secret: He was merely prohibiting the spread of an immature and distorted report of it, imposing silence on the disciples until, after the Resurrection, they would really know what they were saying. The whole episode might therefore appear irrelevant to a later day. And yet it should be remembered that, although the Resurrection is now long past, we are not for that reason necessarily in any better case than the disciples were at this time. No doubt we are more familiar than they then were with the truth of Christ, and have had impressed on us in even greater detail the nature of the events which were then to happen and did happen. But there is a vast difference between merely apprehending the truth and being apprehended by it. In the one case it is recognized, only to be fitted into the framework of our existing conceptions and interpreted in accordance with them; in the other it becomes central, dominating and transforming all else. In the one case we have the ordinary process of reflection, theoretic, abstract; in the other it is 'existential' thought, expressing what vitally determines our whole existence. The distinction, variously stated and elaborated, has been familiar enough since Kierkegaard. And probably few have insisted on its primary importance more vehemently than Bultmann. Indeed, it might well be more fruitful to approach his work from this angle than on the relatively secondary question which has somehow come to be widely regarded as *the* central factor in his thought—the question of what he has rather misleadingly and provocatively called 'demythologizing.' But however that may be, this is a point at which the disciples' story surely becomes supremely relevant. For it is an apt illustration of the fact that what so often stultifies our understanding of the truth of Christ, and renders it unfit for publication, is just that we already know it all so well—but as theory to be acted on or not at our discretion, not as the foundation and driving force of our lives. Yet the remedy can hardly be, as Bultmann appears to suggest, that through the disciples' account of their experience we should feel ourselves summoned to undergo a like transformation—from the old, unreal existence of those who speak abstractly of the truth while remaining, in fact if not intentionally, hostile to it, to the real, meaningful existence for which the truth is the all-determining factor. It is true that Bultmann, in the positive part of his work so often obscured by the dust of the 'demythologizing' storm, gives an impressive account of the nature of this transition. But—is it possible? The centre of the picture seems so firmly occupied by man—man seeing in the message of the Cross the death sentence on his present existence and the summons to abandon it, man venturing in response the complete renunciation of himself and so finding himself in the end, man realizing thereby in his own life the dying and rising again of Christ. And although it is all related to the 'saving act of God' in the 'event of Christ,' yet the expressions are so interpreted that Christ Himself, except for His existence in the Kerygma, seems to be relegated to some obscure point on the circumference, and it is then no longer clear how man is to achieve these very desirable things. It is perhaps Bultmann's chief weakness that, at just this critical point where the liberating power of the gospel should be most clearly expressed, he leaves us with something that appears to resemble the cold, cramping demands of the old legalism. The disciples' story, at any rate, points us in a different direction for the source of the change that came over their lives. And the remedy must surely be the same for us as it was for them: that the Risen Christ, who has already secured for us our entry into the new transformed life, should Himself reach out to claim our thankful devotion and His Spirit take possession of our whole being.

All three groups of passages thus appear to point to the same conclusion. They do not really support the 'Messianic Secret' theory. For they do not contain evidence of a desire on Jesus' part to prevent the recognition of His Messiahship. They indicate rather that, then as now, He was against anything short of a full confession of it.

It is easy, as the demoniacs remind us, to profess the Lordship of Christ while remaining hostile to Him; but He makes it abundantly plain that silence would be better than a confession of that sort. Perfectly clear-eyed defiance, of course, could be the attitude only of the devil himself and

his minions. But these 'unclean spirits' speak through human lips, and it should be clear that the confession of Christ which involves no real intention of positive obedience, whether it be made by the demented or by the respectable, has the same source and shares the same condemnation. Without personal commitment, the profoundest insights in our theology and the most vivid presentation of our message are a mockery of the Lord they profess, and worse than ignorance: 'If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth' (Jn 9^{41}).

It is no doubt equally easy to sing Christ's praises as the great Benefactor of mankind; but He deprecates that as a doubtful undertaking which is more likely to mislead the hearer into neglecting the Lord for His gifts and remaining blind to his real needs. Here lies the great weakness of the purely 'practical' approach, whether in theology or in evangelism. It is an impressive method, particularly to those who are impatient of what seem mere doctrinal wrangles, or disinclined to accept 'beliefs' at the behest of some 'external authority.' For it promises some degree of unanimity, at least at the outset, by leaving on one side the matters on which opinions may be held to differ and concentrating instead on practical needs which are apparently universal. Whether these be material or moral, social or political, we are naturally confident of our ability to recognize and assess them, and ready to honour the Saviour who can be shown to satisfy them. But the 'Christ' who is the panacea of human ills is not the true Christ. The latter still hides Himself from those who 'would come and take him by force, to make him a king' (Jn 6^{15}); and although His compassion may continue to bless, yet the result of making His blessings in themselves the primary thing is likely to be the return of the banished evil 'with seven other spirits worse than himself' (Mt 12^{45}). To put Christ Himself first is to have the promise that all else will then find its proper place and perspective (Mt 6^{33}). But to reverse that order, even with the best of intentions, and describe or proclaim a faith that founds primarily on our own need, is not to serve Christ but to hinder Him: for the result will be both to obscure the true glory of His 'kingdom and righteousness' and to misrepresent the 'other things' as well.

But perhaps most subtly dangerous of all is the confession which is made in all sincerity and without any thought of self-interest, yet stultified by being interpreted in our own terms; and here He warns that no confession can be true except as it is given its meaning by 'the Son of man risen from the dead.' This is the great danger in theology, and the reason why the theologian's work is never done: we have to spell out and describe the truth of Christ, but the terms we very properly use will be constantly infected by our own particular outlook on life, and constantly falsified by our proneness to abstraction, unless they are as constantly submitted to rigorous control and revision in concrete relation to the living Christ Himself. It is also the danger of the type of evangelistic approach which aims primarily at securing 'confessions of Christ' from the masses, leaving them afterwards (with or without directives) to fit the great new experience into the life of everyday as best they can: for then they are almost certain to do so, as Peter did, in ways that make them after all an 'offence' to Christ, minding 'not the things of God, but the things of men' (Mt 16^{23}). If we are to have a really vital theology and a faith worth living, then we shall have to learn to renounce our innate love of the theoretical and the abstract, and to reckon our own cherished ideas and aspirations among the things which are to be 'counted but dung . . . that I may know Christ, and the power of his resurrection' (Ph $3^{8ff.}$). And if we are to have a message really worth proclaiming, then it will have to communicate this knowledge of Christ and the power of His resurrection in such a way as will not merely transform a few moments, but call forth the lasting gratitude in which the whole of life is ordered anew. But the hope of the gospel does not rest on the flimsy basis of our ability to achieve these things any more than on our determination to obey or to subordinate our own interests and needs: it centres here, as everywhere, on the transforming and redeeming grace of the Risen Christ, present 'all days unto the end.'

In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

Easter Day [1]

One of the very worst rulers of the Roman Empire was Nero. He poisoned some of his own family; had those who were the people's favourites put to death; and had spies everywhere in case there was any talk of rebellion.

The Christians he treated worst of all. When Rome was burned down, about thirty years after Jesus' death, he spread a rumour that it was the Christians who had done it and then there followed

[1] This is from the Reverend Cyril Davey's new book, *Talking Round the Calendar*. It is reviewed in the Literature section.

a time of dreadful persecution for those who followed Christ. Christians were tortured, and thrown to the lions in the Coliseum.

At last, news reached Rome that one of the Roman generals in Spain, Galba, had called his soldiers to revolt against Nero. Word spread through the army, and the soldiers turned against the emperor they hated.

In despair, Nero took the Roman soldier's way out. He killed himself, all alone in the house. When they found him, he was dead.

The Empire was filled with relief and joy. At last the tyrant was dead. There need be no more fear of torturing, poison, or the lions. It was all over.

Or was it ?

Nobody quite knew where the rumour started, but somewhere in the East men began to whisper that Nero wasn't dead, after all. He had come back to life—and, what is more, he was marching on Rome at the head of an army of fierce Scythians who had good reason for hating the Romans.

In Rome, those who had led the rebellion trembled with hopeless fear. Nero, they knew, would have no mercy on those who had betrayed him, or plotted against him, or run away.

There would be no mercy.

It was no more than a tale. Nero was as dead as ever. He never came back.

But someone else did, thirty years or more earlier.

Jesus came back.

How do you think people felt about *that* ?

We sometimes imagine they were thrilled and happy. Perhaps they were. But what about Peter, who had denied with oaths and curses that he had ever heard of Jesus ? What about James and Andrew and Matthew, who all ran away ? What about Thomas, who refused to believe it ? Or Caiaphas or Pilate who had sentenced Him to death ? Don't you think that, at first, they must have been just as frightened as the people of Rome when they heard that Nero was alive ?

What would Jesus do—if He really *was* alive—to those who had deserted or plotted against Him ? Wouldn't He be furiously angry, and make them suffer for what they had done ? Most people would have done so.

This is the really extraordinary part of the story. Not that Jesus came to life again, and showed Himself alive—but that He behaved as He did. It is just here, at the end of the Gospels, that we see what Jesus is like and what God is like. It is here, most of all, that we see what His love and His forgiveness mean.

' Jesus is alive ! ' they cried. ' And,' they added, ' though we can scarcely believe it, He loves us still ! '

Guess My Name !

By H. F. Mathews, M.A., B.D., Alsager, Cheshire

' And what shall this man do ? '—Jn 21^{21}.

In our end-of-term revels some students managed to get hold of a number of photographs of members of the staff taken years ago, and we all had to guess the names of the people in the pictures. A page-boy in an Eton suit with hair neatly plastered for a wedding turned out to be a lecturer who now weighs seventeen stones ! A smart boy soldier of the 1914–18 War seemed to be pushing out his chest with great pride ; but now his chest has lost its prominence in favour of a part of his anatomy a little lower down !

It may be great fun to see what people were like years ago, but it can be very misleading. If I were to describe a fussy, niggling Pharisee, priding himself on the way he kept the many rules of his religion, you would not guess that I was thinking of Paul the apostle. If I gave you the story of a young Oxford man who went as a missionary to Georgia but had to come back as a failure because he had been rather foolish, you would not think I was talking about John Wesley.

The wonder of Jesus was that He always thought of what people could become, and not of what they had been. Zacchaeus had been more than a little dishonest, no doubt ; but Jesus never mentioned that. Simon the Pharisee could not forget how evil the woman had been who sobbed at the Master's feet ; but Jesus could only think of what God could make her in the future.

Even the evangelists found it hard to learn that lesson. In the Gospels they could not mention Judas without reminding us that it was he ' which also betrayed him.' If we knew all the circumstances, we might not be so hard even upon Judas. We ourselves think always of ' Doubting ' Thomas because the one story we have of him concerns the way he very naturally questioned the wonder of the Resurrection. Surely he did many more noble things about which we know nothing.

It is easy to pass a fellow in the quad and say to a friend, ' There's Bloggs, who lied about that broken test-tube last week.' Our Lord might have said, ' There's Bloggs, whose love for chemistry can make him help millions of suffering men and women.'

They tell a story in Wales about an inspector of schools who went round a junior class asking each boy what he was going to be when he grew up. One was going to be a doctor, another a plumber, a third a playwright. Then the inspector pointed at a fourth, ' And what are you going to be ' ? he asked. ' Please, sir,' said the boy, ' I'm going to be a man, sir.'

The friend who told me that story added that the trouble is that you can never be sure that a boy *will* become a man. If he goes with the crowd, he will become a sheep. If he is very stubborn, we shall call him a mule. He may become an ass, a pig, a rabbit, or even a rat!

But if you open your heart to Jesus Christ and make Him your Master and Lord, you will have a life of rich adventure and glorious service, and will proudly bear the name of Christian.

The Christian Year

PASSION SUNDAY

A Transformed Sneer

BY THE REVEREND C. LESLIE MITTON, B.A., M.Th., Ph.D., BIRMINGHAM

'He saved others; himself he cannot save.'—Mt 27^{42}.

The New Testament is full of affirmations about the significance of Jesus. Most of them come from men who knew and loved Him as Lord and Saviour. There are, however, a few such utterances, which now we can quote with gratitude as vehicles of Christian truth, which in the first place were spoken by His enemies as contemptuous sneers.

One such sneer was hurled at Him when, as a person already famous, He revisited Nazareth. His own townsfolk, jealous and resentful of one whom they had known as a boy in their midst, turned from Him, sneering: 'Is not this the carpenter?'—as though to point to His humble origin was to discredit all that He had become. Now we are grateful for that taunt. When ordinary people feel their insignificance amidst the movement of world events, they are tempted to think that God too must regard them as mere nothings. Then they remember that when God Himself came to this earth, it was to begin as one of themselves, a working man, with hands roughened by the use of hammer and saw.

A further sneer was directed against Him by the religious leaders of His people concerning the company He kept. To them it was clear that a good man would avoid evil company. Jesus, however, arguing that it was sick people who need the doctor, mixed freely with those regarded as irreligious. 'You can tell a man by the company he keeps,' says the proverb, and the Pharisees applied it to Jesus, calling Him in mockery 'the friend of publicans and sinners.' It was meant as biting insult; it has become a tribute of humble gratitude. For in our darkest moments of failure and need, when we think that the Holy God must be sick and tired of sinners like us, we can be reminded that the Son of God came to earth, not for the sake of self-satisfied and reputable people, but to be the Friend of sinners, and so even in our blackest despair, our Friend.

So, too, His enemies sneered at Him as He hung dying on the Cross. They had planned His destruction, but knowing something of His strange powers, felt uneasy about their power to achieve it. But now at last Roman nails secured His hands and feet, and Roman soldiers stood guard at the foot of the Cross. All danger of His escape seemed past, and their fierce hatred melts into scorn. 'Look,' they sneer, 'He saved others. He cannot save Himself.' But this taunt, too, has been transformed by the touch of Christ, and made to enshrine an enduring treasure.

'Himself he cannot save!' It was a good thing to be kind-hearted to others, of course, but surely it was only common sense to give your best endeavour to your own interests, and to spare for others only what was left over. But here is One so incredibly foolish that He squanders His strength for the sake of others, and then, when His very safety is in jeopardy, proves Himself weak and helpless. Could anyone imagine a more pathetic failure?

He cannot save Himself! Of course there could be no other explanation. No one would die like that, if he could do anything to stop it. Yet, as we look back, we know there is a better explanation. He could have saved Himself. For instance, He need never have faced His enemies in their stronghold at Jerusalem. Moreover, could He not even on the Cross have called on legions of angels? It is not that He could not, but that He would not, save Himself. We only partly understand it, but in some strange way by this complete obedience to His Father's will, He was putting into His Father's hand a weapon that God would be able to use all down the succeeding ages to break His way into the heart of sinful man. Such a weapon is the Cross, bringing man to repentance, comforting him with forgiveness, and leading him back home to God.

Even more significant, however, than the concluding sneer is the admission which leads up to it: 'He saved others'—and this on the lips of bitter enemies. They would not have conceded it, unless they knew it was common knowledge that it would be futile to deny. So having no alternative but to admit it, they use it cleverly to barb their malice, just as earlier, when unable to deny His power to heal, they had ascribed it to the prince of evil. No stronger testimony than this could be found to the power of Jesus to bring health to human bodies and minds. It gives us added confidence in believing the records of His saving power which His friends passed on for us in the Gospels. No fact

about Jesus is more sure than this. Luke, describing a scene of healing, adds : ' Power came forth from him, and healed them '—power, from Him to them, the blind, the lepers, the paralysed, the demented. Something life-giving spilled over from His abundance to meet human need that sought His help.

It was equally available for moral diseases. A hard sinner to win from his sin was Zacchaeus, grown callous in an occupation which almost forced a man to be unprincipled, dishonest, and cruel. Normally he could chuckle over his roguery, when bluff and threat had extorted money that was not his due, but with Jesus as a self-invited guest in his house he began to feel ashamed, till shame drove him to repentance and reformation. Jesus acknowledged the fruits of his penitence with the words : ' To-day has salvation come to this house.'

Jesus called this change in Zacchaeus ' salvation.' In its deepest sense, this word means a right relationship with God, which is established in human life through a right relationship with Jesus. But that relationship reveals itself in character and conduct. Zacchaeus, eager to become an honest, even a generous man, was saved. His new relationship with Jesus made it possible for him to begin to be something of what God meant him to be. That is always a real part of salvation. It begins here and now, and reaches out to its fulfilment in that life beyond death.

When Jesus died on the Cross, His enemies with relief, and His friends in dismay said : ' That is the end of Him.' But it wasn't. His friends came to know that the life-giving spirit, which they had known through that loved human form of Jesus of Nazareth was still a life-giving presence. Though no longer physically seen, He raised them up from their failure and despair, restoring their soul, making them into the nucleus of His Church, against which the gates of Hell should not prevail.

Moreover, this continuing power to save, they soon learned, was not merely for themselves, who had known Him in the flesh. Through them it could pass into the lives of others. At the gate of the Temple Peter was confronted with a beggar's bowl, as a poor cripple asked for a copper. Stopping he looked at the pitiable figure before him, and in an inspired moment said : ' I have no money that I can give you. But I have something. In the name of Jesus, rise and walk.' The man stood up, tried his feet, found them strong, and went leaping into the Temple.

So the disciples learned that the saving power of Jesus, so far from ending with His death, was rather set free of all limitations of time and space. What Jesus had done while on earth, He continued to do in His risen power. He still saved men, bringing them to peace with God, releasing in their lives healing powers, enabling them to become their true selves. That is why we call Him ' Saviour.'

It is all too easy for men to think of Jesus primarily as a moral standard to be lived up to, and to forget that He is also the ' Life-giving Spirit ' who can re-shape men's lives into the pattern God had planned for them. Whatever in our lives is defeating God's purposes He can remove. Impurity, jealousy, hatred, fear, worry, resentment, which often withstand our hardest endeavours to expel them, are the evil spirits which He can still cast out, when we offer them to Him, believing that He can deal with them. They are the enemies of God within us. He came to defeat the enemies of God and save human life from their power. It is part of His saving power to enable men to be what God meant them to be. He came to seek and to save. ' He died to be our Saviour.' He rose from the dead and lives for ever that His saving power shall at all times be available to our need and our faith.

PALM SUNDAY

The Law of Sacrifice

BY PRINCIPAL H. F. LOVELL COCKS, M.A., D.D., BRISTOL

' Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone ; but if it die, it beareth much fruit. He that loveth his life loseth it ; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.'—Jn $12^{24ff.}$. (R.V.)

When Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday there were certain Greeks who were anxious to meet Him. Their coming was to Jesus the signal that a new phase of His ministry was about to begin. The gospel that had been preached to Jews was now to be preached to Gentiles also. Jesus was greatly moved. ' The hour is come ! ' He exclaimed, ' the Son of man is to be glorified ! ' The Divine message of salvation is now to be sounded throughout the world and the Kingdom of heaven opened to all believers. May it not have been that Satan now made one last desperate effort to turn Jesus aside from the path of obedience ? Jesus at least had not been deceived by the tumultuous ' triumphal entry.' He knew that apart from a handful who followed Him His own people had rejected Him, and that before long even His disciples would forsake Him. Now, indeed, was the soul of Jesus troubled. Why not leave Jerusalem to its fate and make a new beginning

among God-fearing Greeks like these? Would not a mission to the Gentiles afford Him an honourable escape from the Cross and the prospect of a far greater harvest than He had been able to reap among the Jews? Jesus withstands the tempter. There is no honourable escape from the Cross. His gospel will, indeed, be carried to the Gentiles, but the success of that Gentile mission depends on His willingness to die. It is only by being 'lifted up from the earth' that He will draw all men unto Himself. He had been sent to His own people to bear witness of His Father's righteousness and love—and He must continue to bear that witness to the end. Through the shadows gathering around Him Jesus descries the beginning of His universal reign. But there is no evading Calvary. For the Cross is the appointed means of final victory. Not in spite of, but because of, His death the Son of man will be glorified. The grain of wheat, falling into the ground will die; but dying it will bear much fruit.

We have here more than a word of Jesus foretelling the mighty issue of His own sacrifice. As His next words clearly show, the Master believes that what holds good of Himself and His own death applies to His disciples too. 'He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life shall keep it'—Jesus said this or something like this so often and with such emphasis that we may say that this principle of dying in order to live belongs to the very heart of His teaching. Again and again—and not only in this particular form of words—He stresses the necessity of self-sacrifice as the way of self-fulfilment. The gate into the Kingdom is a narrow one. The would-be disciple must be ready to forsake all for the sake of the Kingdom. Only those who bring their crosses with them—in expectation of persecution and a violent death—can hope to follow the Master. 'He that loveth his life loseth it; he that hateth his life shall keep it.'

'Loving' and 'hating' here—as elsewhere in the teaching of Jesus—refer not to our feelings but to our priorities. To 'love' our life is to put ourselves first. It is to be primarily concerned with our own safety, or our own comfort, or our own standing among men. To 'hate' our life does not mean that we care nothing for our safety, comfort, popularity, and the rest—but that these things wherever they come in our scale of priorities, never come first. What comes first is God's Kingdom—God's will and our obedience to it.

Self-preservation has been called Nature's first law. But self-preservation is primarily an instinctive thing. To 'love' one's own life is to elevate this instinctive impulse into a principle and a policy. Yet the principle is a principle not of life but of death: the policy makes not for progress but for stagnation. Even on the level of animal instinct, the survival of the species often depends not on the overmastering of the impulse to self-preservation by the impulse to self-sacrifice, as when a mother-bird risks her own life to save her chicks. And at the human level it is easy to see that a readiness to take risks is the condition of all satisfying living. Without it there would be little progress in science, few inventions, and no polar exploration, no mountaineering. We cannot even learn to swim without taking the plunge! The man of one talent in the parable failed because he 'loved' his life and refused to take the risk inseparable from the investment of the money that had been entrusted to him. On the other hand, the merchant seeking goodly pearls succeeded because, when at last he found what seemed to him the one incomparable pearl, he was prepared to back his judgment by selling all that he had and risking his entire fortune in order to buy it.

So far we have been talking as though we can avoid sacrifice if we choose. But that is not true. If we 'love' our lives and make 'safety first!' our motto, we only *seem* to avoid risk and loss. The truth is that there is no getting away from sacrifice. Everything has to be paid for in the end. The only thing that matters is whether what we get out of life is worth what we have to give for it. The man who 'loves' his life pays for his unadventurous, selfish ease by losing many opportunities of doing good to his neighbours and making the world a better place for his having lived in it. He forgoes the peace of mind that comes from a consciousness of duty well done. He runs the risk of losing the powers he refuses to employ. Above all, he condemns himself to loneliness. The man for whom self-preservation has become second nature may have acquaintances and hangers-on, but not friends. We can have real friends only so far as we are prepared to take the risks that are involved in loving people. For there is risk in every approach we make towards true love and friendship with our fellow-man. We risk a repulse, we risk disillusionment, we risk betrayal. Love takes such risks gladly and great is its reward. But your self-centred and selfish man shrinks from the risks of friendship and so misses the enrichment that it brings. Like the unplanted seed, he 'abideth by himself, alone.'

'He that hateth his life in this world.' What happens to him? Well, he is never bored, certainly. He lives dangerously, though, and he may pay the price. Is death the end of him? Let us ask that question of those Greeks who have come to see Jesus. They are not sure. They tell us that such a man will leave behind him a name and an example to inspire those who come after him. But who knows whether there be any other

immortality than this? Perhaps one of these Greeks will quote Euripides to us—

> But if any far-off state there be
> Dearer than life to mortality;
> The hand of the Dark hath hold thereof,
> And mist is under and mist above.
> And so we are sick for life, and cling
> On earth to this nameless and shining thing.
> For other life is a fountain sealed,
> And the deeps below us are unrevealed
> And we drift on legends for ever!
> (Euripides, *Hippolytus*, tr. G. Murray.)

We Christians do not drift on legends. We stand on the solid rock of the victory of Jesus Christ, who stooped to conquer, died to live, and who has given us a share in His abundant life. The life we live in Him, which begins here and is perfected hereafter, is more than everlasting. It has a richness of fulfilment that is beyond our present comprehension. 'I came that they may have life.' We cannot imagine the range and variety and wonder of that life. But we may believe the Master when He assures us that it is more than worth all the toil and risk and sacrifice of the way wherein He bids us follow Him.

EASTER DAY

The Power of His Resurrection

BY THE REVEREND JOHN L. KENT, M.A., GLASGOW

'The exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead.'—Eph $1^{19f.}$.

When Paul uttered these words he was not on a rostrum proclaiming a doctrine; he was on his knees offering a prayer. He was pleading before God for his Ephesian friends. 'Grant them,' he was saying in effect, 'the gift of spiritual insight.' 'Make them to see.' It was Paul's prayer for the Christians of Ephesus but not for them alone. For his brothers in Philippi he was anxious and he offered the same petition for them that they might clearly discern the things that were vital. He was concerned for the Church at Colossae and again he besought for them the gift of spiritual insight.

And little wonder. Here were young churches, newly born, assailed by a paganism that threatened to divide their life, corrupt their faith and pervert their virtue. What defence could be thrown around them to give their young life a chance to grow? That was Paul's problem. But it is the concern of every minister with young Christians to guard, guide, and nourish in the faith.

Paul's answer is quite emphatic. No external protection would avail. The only safeguard for these children in the faith was the gift of spiritual insight. Let them see the landscape of the new world into which they had been born; let them discern the range and penetration of the love that had redeemed them; let them apprehend with heart and mind the grace that had called them out of darkness into light—that would secure, unite, and strengthen them in the face of the world's hostility.

This was true of Paul's converts; and it has always been true.

One would imagine that the supreme desire of men and women gripped by the love of God and surrendering to it would be to know it ever more fully. But it has not been so. All too easily men's allegiance has been diverted, their fellowship has been broken, their moral force weakened because they have not been fired with a burning desire to search out the vast expanses of the Kingdom. 'Make them to see.'

Now, says Paul, the point at which this spiritual insight receives its greatest illumination is the resurrection of Jesus. The clue to what has happened to you, so he tells his Ephesian friends, is to be found in the power that smote death impotent. Oh, that God would give you to see the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe.

For it is the Resurrection that changes what otherwise would be bitter tragedy into good news. Without His rising from the dead, all that Jesus was and said and did is vain and powerless to save. True, we would still have His matchless life, His surpassing wisdom, His heroic death; but, even had the story survived, it would be a tale of tragedy. The bravest, wisest, and most loving spirit that had ever inspired man had been snuffed out in the merciless cruelty of a Cross. But this is not the story—not tragedy but good news. God did not stand aloof; He stood in and vindicated Him. He declared Jesus to be His Son by raising Him from the dead. His power, that had been with Him all through, authenticating His word, illumining His life, and sustaining His dying love, burst forth in stupendous glory in His resurrection. And that power, Paul proclaims, is ours who believe.

That is good news. It signifies that *the goodness of Jesus is ours*. Without the Resurrection it is His secret and His only. His moral excellence and life of self-giving become a phenomenon. But if He was raised by the mighty act of God, then His moral energy can be transmitted to us and His character reproduced in us. 'I want to be like Jesus,' cried Kagawa, once the new life began to stir within him. 'God make me like Jesus.' And God could and did answer his prayer.

The goodness of Jesus and the power of God are by the Resurrection revealed to be one and the same. The mighty force that raised Jesus from the dead, when applied to human life, works out in the direction of the character of Jesus. His virtues it is seeking to produce in the sons of men. Behind all who have truly committed themselves to becoming like Jesus lies the Resurrection power of God. 'Don't you see it?' asks Paul. 'What a mighty power is available to us who believe!'

If the young churches of Paul's day needed this insight, no less do we. Far too many of us have given up the hope of having Christ's character reproduced in us. The sad plight of the world has intimidated us. Our own repeated failures have appalled us.

The tragedy is not that so many of us have abandoned these hopes but that we are reconciled to it. After all, we say to ourselves, Jesus was unique. Let us be sensible and realistic and content with what is within our powers.

Of course, there is truth in it. We are mortal men and in consequence limits are set to our moral attainments. But no man knows what these limits are. See these great men and women of Christian story. They believed, and a greater measure of Christlikeness was possible for them than they ever dreamed. 'Impossible?' said Richard Cobden when they scorned his attempts to have the Corn Laws repealed. 'Impossible? If that is all that is the matter, I move we go ahead.' Shame on us! On our knees and repeat Paul's prayer for ourselves! Let God's power in!

It is good news. It signifies that *the victory of Jesus is ours*. For there is this to be said for those of us who have lowered our standards—we have made a new assessment of the malignity of evil. We have marked its ravages in the world around us and have been humiliated by its destructive activity in ourselves. Ourselves! Pride, worldly ambition, craven cowardice, rank selfishness, fleshly desire—they are in us. How can we aspire to the goodness of Jesus whose souls are the haunt and habitation of such debased residents?

But surely this is just what the power of the Resurrection means. The evil that is resident in us all, good men as well as bad, crucified Jesus, but at the very moment when its victory seemed complete, its abject failure and defeat were sealed.

This is the mainspring of our hope. If we believe that God, summoning His mighty energy, is able to overcome sin and death, then the victory He wrought for Jesus is ours too. He has the capacity to turn our tragic defeats into glorious triumphs. Start with Peter and go through the thrilling record of the saints' achievements and you will see how true it is.

Believe it! Open your heart to His infinite power and it can happen to you!

It is good news. It signifies that *the presence of Jesus is ours*. For the power that liberated Jesus from the grip of death has enabled Him to be the unseen Companion of every man, in every place and for all time. Through Him the moral energy and reforming grace of God become the possession of us all.

This is no mere article of a creed; no pious sentiment. Unless the religious experience of His greatest servants is the product of overheated imagination and a sheer fantasy, nothing is more sure than the comradeship of the living Christ. 'The Gospels are not four,' says T. R. Glover, 'but ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, and the last word of every one of them is, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."'

Wilbur Chapman, the great American evangelist, once encountered General Booth and asked him the secret of the great movement he had started and sustained. For reply, the General said, 'God asked and I gave Him all there was of me. . . . From the day that I got the poor of London on my heart, and a vision of what Christ could do for them, I made up my mind that God should have all there was of William Booth.'

'All there was of me.' If we give Him that, seeing what Christ can do, recognizing the greatness of God's power in Him, then His goodness, His victory, and His eternal presence are vouchsafed to us.

First Sunday after Easter

What is my Duty?

By the Reverend Professor George Johnston, B.D., Ph.D., Emmanuel College, Toronto, Canada

'Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law.'—Ro 13^8 (R.S.V.).

1. The Toronto morning paper in its Saturday edition generally has articles of special interest and I was intrigued a little time ago by the headlines of a piece from Belfast, 'Beating the Customs now Ulster's favourite Pastime.' One of the stories told how a bus-load of ladies from an honoured Presbyterian congregation in Belfast was returning one evening from a trip to Dublin. 'Their bus was fairly bulging with contraband. Since it was too big a case for the border patrol alone, the ladies were driven, without their knowledge, to Police Headquarters in Belfast where they were compelled to disgorge their spoil!' Is this a true story? One must suppose that it is. In any case

we have all met people in many different countries who considered that it was right and proper to smuggle luxury goods under the noses of the Customs men.

It is most perplexing to see Christians of one type raising their church funds by Bingo games, while others refuse any method save direct donation; church courts condemning the gambling and liquor fever, the members of their congregations in large numbers betting on the Derby and enjoying the neighbourhood cocktail parties without a qualm of conscience. What are we to make of it? What is our duty? Does it matter what we do as citizens or private individuals?

2. It may be said that our age is peculiar in its moral confusion and is simply paying the price for all its scientific and psychological achievement. The late Bishop of Birmingham once suggested that 'those whose outlook has been transformed by the conclusions of modern biologists see, in selfishness and lust, by-products of instincts implanted to secure the continuance of the individual and the race.' Moral confusion is due to our growing pains. Leave man alone; he'll be all right soon!

Make out a case like that? Of course you could, to some extent; but it won't do. We are not the first to realize the half-animal, half-angelic nature of man; ages long since wrestled with the same problems of hate, fear, and lust, wine and women, and knew that much was wrong. If we know more about the psychological and somatic roots of sin, we have not thereby abolished it. Sin is as old as conscience, and mankind has always had a conscience.

No, our moral confusion is probably part and parcel of our contemporary alarm that the whole universe is meaningless; that God is either a fiction or a useless bit of furniture. For the abolition of an eternal God means the abolition of values and sanctities that hold us responsible. Thoughtful atheists like Dr. Alex Comfort may think otherwise, and advise us to create our own values. Why should I? Why should I do anything except what is in my own interest? How can the multiplicity of self-interests in even one generation be harmonized? All that can happen is that Right will become the will of the unscrupulous, the stronger, or it will be identified with the will of the State. Destroy God and social chaos results; abandon that inward assurance we have of eternal right, and of values that demand our obedience, and the end for everyone, believer and unbeliever alike, is the worst form of totalitarian tyranny.

3. St. Paul would not agree that we have merely 'an inward assurance.' His argument in the early chapters of Romans is that man is inexcusable if he behaves immorally, for no one in his right mind need be ignorant of the power and divinity of God. How the Apostle would chuckle over Mr. Fred Hoyle's naïve cosmology: of hydrogen atoms 'created' (if you please) by no one out of nothing, simply springing from nowhere to keep the universe a going concern! Childish philosophy from a mathematician: any child can know, because he is still a child, that this amazing universe did not happen like Topsy. That is irrational. Moreover, in that child there is an inborn organ of judgment, a gift of the Creator. Let nobody mislead you into thinking that conscience is imposed by the family or the community; it belongs with human reason. The 'seeing-eye' dog is a very precious wonder, but it will never grow into a moral person. God who made you and me with this organ of discrimination, with angelic reason, is the source of duty, for He made us for His own purpose. In simple language: it is my duty to be what God intends me to be and to do what God wills me to do.

St. Paul, who could tell the Jew what a special obligation lay on him because he had the Mosaic Law to guide him, would also tell us Christians that we have similar obligations; for we too honour the Law and yet more the prophets. And if you say that it is very difficult to keep the Law, Paul would heartily agree: he tried as diligently as he knew to do just that. 'I have been through it all myself,' he would answer: 'you need what I needed: a fresh revelation of God to your mind and heart and a fresh release of spiritual power that will enable you to do your duty. For you and I cannot achieve fulfilment, we can never be really good on our own. And these needs can be met, as I very well know, if only Jesus becomes Lord and Saviour of your life.'

4. From Jesus we learn that duty is spelled in one imperative, 'Love!' By loving our neighbours we fulfil every moral command, wrote St. Paul. And now, if you press me and insist that I come down to earth: what does loving mean? Pacifism? Letting others push one to the wall? Why, the answer is that there are no ready-made rules about loving and no one to dictate to you: that is one reason why even Christians sometimes have to differ about morality in politics or economics. A man has to express love as he feels it, with all the wisdom and help he can find in the fellowship of the Body of Christ which is the Church and in his secret room of prayer where the Spirit of God hears and speaks in secret. Loving will surely involve behaving as Jesus did, but under the circumstances of our own life. There will be terrible meekness in it that must fight against slavery, injustice, hypocrisy, and exploitation of others. There will be realism in it so that

one must examine with care what it means to be a citizen of this land or that, the father of these children, the husband of this woman, the employer of these people, the member of this denomination or that church. For love bears on the total area of our daily life. St. Francis de Sales said: 'The Queen bee never takes wings without being surrounded by all her subjects; even so Love never enters the heart but it is sure to bring all other virtues in its train.'

What we shall find is that the submission of love is impossible for man until he knows himself to be still part animal, part angel, but destined in Christ to be fully God's son. Faith in Christ, conversion, commitment to Him as Lord, is a sacrifice; a surrender of the animal and merely natural elements in our nature, a penitent disavowal of our past lives without Christ's spirit; for we must die in order to live. We must kill the old self to let the new person grow. For then God in His gracious love towards us fills our emptiness and enables us with the Divine Spirit. Then our eyes are opened and our wills set free. Then it is our delight to will only what the Heavenly Father wills and to find 'in obedience all our joy.' That is genuine child-like life. When I was a child and a foolish youth, I may often have thought that the children's hymn,

> Saviour, teach me, day by day,
> Love's sweet lesson to obey

was pretty childish and weak-kneed. I know better now. Is there any peace for us or any achievement except we become as little children, who find through Christ that Love most surely lays upon us its own burdens, its own demands, aye, and all its joys?

Recent Foreign Theology

Köhler's Old Testament Theology. For nearly two decades Köhler's excellent treatment of Old Testament theology has been highly valued for its succinct survey of the material and for its general balance. That it has now appeared in a third edition[1] is the best evidence of the usefulness it has been found to have, and an English edition would be a boon to students here. This edition has been revised throughout, though there has been no major change. Account has been taken of recent literature, but substantially this is still the same work that has been used with profit for so long. It leaves for a history of Hebrew religion the study of ancient practices which were carried into Israelite religion for a time and then fell away, and concerns itself with the systematic study of all that was of the essence of Old Testament religion. That the author's eye is towards the New Testament is indicated clearly in the termination of his book. For he ends with the study of the Suffering Servant, and observes: 'Here the theology of the Old Testament ends. In the New Testament we find the question: "Understandest thou what thou readest?"'

The Apocalypse. Few books of the Bible are so much studied by one type of reader and so much ignored by others, save for a few familiar and moving passages, as the Book of Revelation. Many have given it an anti-papal interpretation, and even Newman in his Anglican days thought the Pope was Antichrist. By Roman Catholics it was largely ignored in the nineteenth century, and it is stated in the volume now under review that scarcely a German Catholic commentary on the Book appeared in the whole century, with the exception of two. That is now changed, and the more objective study of the Book is common with both Protestant and Catholic. About ten years ago a Catholic commentary on this Book by P. Ketter appeared in Herder's *Bibelkommentar*, and this has now been reissued unchanged,[2] the author having died in the meantime. It maintains the Johannine authorship by the disciple John, and ascribes the book to A.D. 95–96. It rejects a mythological or historical interpretation for a supra-historical exposition. Perhaps naturally it frequently dismisses the fanatical interpretations of the *Schwärmer* and the chiliasts, and is more concerned to write a commentary that shall be religiously profitable than to find here a blue print of the ages. It interprets the Book in the light of the historical circumstances out of which it arose, but throughout avoids a literalistic interpretation. This is wise, especially in view of the dismal history of the succession of such interpretations and their fate. Beneath all its bizarre figures this Book proclaims religious truths, and though its admission to the Canon was not unchallenged, it has an enduring message.

Christ and Asclepius. A little book of greater importance than its size would suggest is devoted to the subject of the beginnings of the opposition of Christians to the cult of Asclepius, and is written

[1] *Theologie des Alten Testaments* [1953]. Mohr, Tübingen.

[2] *Die Apokalypse* [1953]. (*Die Heilige Schrift für das Leben erklärt*, XVI 2.) Herder, Freiburg; DM 15, in cloth.

by Professor K. H. Rengstorf, of Münster.[1] The centre of the cult was Pergamum, where the shrine of Asclepius was built in the time of Antoninus Pius. But Professor Rengstorf thinks the cult is older than this shrine, and he finds in the Johannine writings much which may have had a polemical purpose in relation to it. Indeed he finds in these writings the beginnings of Christian polemic against it. He then maintains that this provides new evidence for the view that the Johannine writings came from Asia Minor—a view which has been lately rejected in some quarters—and supports the traditional view that they were from the pen of a Jewish Christian and not from a Syrian convert from paganism, as has been maintained by Hirsch.

Introduction to the Old Testament. An excellent book on *The Formation of the Old Testament* has been written by Dr. Curt Kuhl, a German parish clergyman whose scholarly articles are well known.[2] After a preliminary discussion of the authority, transmission, Canon and literary genres of the Old Testament, the author proceeds to the introduction to the individual books of the Bible, with an appendix on the Apocrypha. In general he adopts the critically orthodox positions, and in the course of his work does not discuss the many recent challenges to those positions at various points. At the end of the volume his footnotes are assembled, and here the reader will find abundant references to recent literature. On the Servant Songs of Deutero-Isaiah the author favours the view that the Servant is Deutero-Isaiah and that the fourth Song is by a disciple, while on the chronological question of Ezra-Nehemiah he shares the view that Nehemiah preceded Ezra, but that both belonged to the reign of Artaxerxes I. The book may be warmly commended.

Footpaths through the Old Testament. Professor M. A. Beek, of Amsterdam, has an excellent gift of popularization, which he has used to good purpose in a survey of the Old Testament for Dutch readers.[3] Attractively written and well illustrated this book rests on sound and up-to-date scholarship, but is entirely unencumbered with documentation. It is not a history of Israel, though it deals with many of the moments of history; it is not an introduction to the books of the Old Testament, though it includes much that belongs to such an introduction. It has eighty-six sections, each dealing with some salient part of the Old Testament record. It is selective, but well chosen, and the reader who studies this book will have a good knowledge of the contents of the Old Testament, and a reliable understanding of the meaning of it all.

'Beginning at Moses.' The late Professor B. Holwerda, of Kampen, belonged to one of the youngest and most conservative of the Dutch denominations. He was a man of singular charm and charity, and I knew him as a very gracious host. His private library was remarkably large for a man of his years, and included the works of men of all schools. When he died at a very early age his Church lost a scholar, and I a friend. He had published very little, but a posthumous volume has now appeared, containing four studies of which part had been published during his lifetime, bearing the title '*Beginning at Moses.*'[4] The most important of these studies deals with the priest-king in the Old Testament, and particularly with Ps 110 and Zech 6, and with some of the inter-testamental literature. The author denies that the priest-king was a feature of Israel's life, but argues that the figure belonged to the messianic hope. The first study, on 'The place which the Lord shall choose,' is directed against the critical view of the Book of Deuteronomy. The remaining studies are on the exegesis of Am 3^{3-8} and on *Heilsgeschichte* (in Dutch *Heilshistorie*) in preaching.

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[1] *Die Anfänge der Auseinandersetzung zwischen Christusglaube und Asklepiosfrömmigkeit* [1953]. Aschendorff, Münster.

[2] *Die Entstehung des Alten Testaments* (Sammlung Dalp) [1953]. Francke, Bern; Swiss Fr. 10.80.

[3] *Wegen en Voetsporen van het Oude Testament* [1953]. W. Gaade, Delft; Fr. 9.50.

[4] . . . *Begonnen hebbende van Mozes* . . . [1953]. Littooij, Terneuzen.

Entre Nous

The Ten Commandments

There are two ways in which a choir may sing. It may sing with absolute technical perfection; or it may be that the performance has technical imperfections, but none the less possesses that indefinable quality of verve; and the vital, if imperfect performance, is always more moving than the performance of cold and flawless perfection. It is the same with books. There are some books which one could not criticize if one tried; there are others which may have faults, but which possess an urge and a sweep and an energy which make them an inspiration. Such is *Smoke on the Mountain: An Interpretation of the Ten Commandments in terms of To-day*, by Miss Joy Davidman, with a Foreword by C. S. Lewis (Hodder and Stoughton; 7s. 6d. net). Miss Davidman has had a varied career. She has been

a teacher of English Literature; she is a distinguished poet; she has been a screen writer for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer; she was for a time a convert to Communism; and she is the daughter of Jewish rationalist parents.

She has a hatred for the religious writers who believed 'that thought should be clothed in pure wool.' That certainly cannot be said of her. She writes with steel and fire and sometimes vitriol. On the First Commandment she writes: 'Greatest among the false gods are these: Sex, the State, Science and Society.' On the Second Commandment she writes: 'What shape is an idol? Need it be a man shape or a beast shape? May it not be any possible shape men can devise—anything from a dynamo to a mink coat—as long as you look to it for your salvation?' She has a penetrating passage on how the Church can become an idol. A person wants a television set to keep up with the neighbours. Public spirit comes in, and he wants a television set for the teen-agers' club. But the Church moves men to do that kind of thing, so this person enters the Church as the mainspring of social service. But this person comes to see that the Church is a good thing in itself. Then he concentrates on a better building, a more melodious organ, a better salary for the minister, more money for foreign missions. The Church has become an idol. 'To put it bluntly, I have forgotten that the Church itself is not God.'

On the Sixth Commandment she says: 'No previous age has ever equalled our horror of killing, but then, no previous age ever killed so much.' On the Eighth Commandment she writes: 'The thief is not only he who steals my purse, but also he who steals my trade; and he who underpays me, and he who overcharges me; and he who taxes me for his own advantage instead of mine; and he who sells me trash instead of honest goods. The ultimate form of theft, undoubtedly, is slave-holding, which denies a man even the ownership of his own body.' On the Ninth Commandment she writes: 'Let us make note of the hypocrite; we shall meet him again, every last one of us, any time we care to look in the mirror.'

This book is like a gale of clean wind from the open spaces. If it does nothing else it demonstrates beyond all possible doubt that the Ten Commandments are the most relevant document in the world to-day. WILLIAM BARCLAY

Edward Woods

In January, 1953, just a fortnight after he returned to England from a hard two months' mission in Malaya, Edward Sydney Woods, ninety-fourth Bishop of Lichfield, died. We have no full scale 'life' yet, but a charming slim scarlet-bound volume (paper boards) has been published by Messrs. Gollancz—*Edward Sydney Woods* (7s. 6d. net). It contains some twenty appreciations from his friends, collected by his daughter, Mrs. Reynolds Stone. A volume of this nature might well be dull, but this one gives a vivid and at the same time a candid picture of the greatly loved Bishop.

One appreciation is that of Dr. Woods' son, the Bishop of Middleton. He says frankly that his father was no theologian. What interested him was the application of the Faith to everyday life. 'He was not at all the conventional director of souls, but he was guide and counsellor to an enormous circle of friends who were trying to make the same application of their religion to daily life.'

The 'religion which sustained and permeated Edward Woods' entire life was in essence a quite simple evangelical faith—"We love, because He first loved us."'

The Bishop of Middleton speaking of his father's death says that 'he never (so far as I know) read with any seriousness the writings of the great Continental spiritual directors. His spiritual guide was Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, from which he was hardly ever separated. . . . It was naturally for Bunyan that he asked when he was dying, and it must be read from the precious copy which had been specially bound and given by the Queen Mother. For twenty-four hours, almost without a stop, we read it to him. . . . "Read the bits I don't know by heart," he said. "It's more interesting." He did not discuss his dying: Bunyan said all that was needed to be said. . . . "And with that Christian brake out with a loud voice, Oh I see him again! and he tells me, When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. . . . Thus they got over."'

New Series

A series on *Important New Testament Hypotheses Reconsidered* will start soon. Further details will be given shortly.

In May the first article in the series *Some Archaeological Sites and the Old Testament* will appear. Among the contributors in this series, which will deal with the significance of the sites for the Biblical student, will be Mr. J. M. Allegro (Qumrân), the Rev. John Gray (Ras Shamra), and the Rev. J. N. Schofield (Mari and Nuzu Sites). Mr. Cyril Gadd's background article on 'The Mari Letters' which begins this month will finish in the April number and be followed by Mr. Schofield's article on the Biblical significance of the site.

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